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THE DYNAMIC OF CHRISTIANITY

THE DYNAMIC OF CHRISTIANITY

A Study of the Vital and Permanent Element in the Christian Religion

BY

EDWARD MORTIMER CHAPMAN

"Enthroned above the world although He sit,
Still is the world in Him and He in it;
The self-same Power in yonder sunset glows
That kindled in the lords of Holy Writ."
Richard Hovey.

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To

I. N. C.

PREFACE

A PREFACE would scarce be needful to this little book were it not for a fear and a hope cherished by the Author. His fear is lest some casual reader should be tempted to number him among those who go about to "reconcile Science and Religion." He has no claim upon the fellowship of that noble and futile company. Their ideal is so worthy that they deserve the reward of all peacemakers — a reward which he would gladly share. But he is hindered from seeking it in their society by a doubt as to the application of the Beatitude to those who cry "Peace, peace," where there is no quarrel. The reconciliation of Science and Religion seems to him to be like an attempt to harmonize the fact of sunrise with the joy of walking and working in the light.

His hope is that he may succeed in remind-

ing a generation very busy with the statics of Religion — its organizations and its machineries, its creeds and its charities — of the principle of life and power which gives them their significance. It may be that this principle and that which has given to the last century of adventure in the realm of Physical Science its peculiar and compelling fascination will prove to be identical.

The theme is so large that many essays must be made toward its exposition and its application to life. Some of these will prove to be successes and others failures; the failures being perhaps no less needful to the ultimate prevalence of truth than the successes. Since that which is set down between these covers has been born of experience, the Author ventures to hope that it may find place in the more cheerful category; but if not, that it may at least be numbered among the Failures that Help.

E. M. C.

The Homestead,
Old Saybrook, Conn.,
23 July, 1904.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	Introduction	1
II.	The Zeitgeist	22
III.	The Present State of Popular Theological Thought	47
IV.	The Religion of the People	72
V.	The Social Unrest	96
VI.	The Thesis	121
VII.	The Witness of Scripture	142
VIII.	The Witness of the Christian Church	168
IX.	The Witness of Individual Experience	193
X.	The New Freedom of Faith	221
XI.	The New Meaning of Some Old Words	255
XII.	The New Harmonies of Revelation	288
	Appendix: Synopsis of Argument	321
	Index	327

THE
DYNAMIC OF CHRISTIANITY

I

INTRODUCTION

More than six decades have now passed since Macaulay imagined his famous traveler from New Zealand perched upon a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's. The essayist's contention was that even in the day when London should have become a desolation, and the centre of her formal worship a heap, the Church of Rome might still prove to be an undiminished power in the world. He argued with characteristic grace and assurance that theology was not, and could not become, a progressive science; that Socrates, in confuting the little atheist Aristodemus, had anticipated all that is really significant in Paley's argument from design; and that the fact of Sir Thomas More's readiness to die for his faith in transubstantiation is sufficient to lead us to expect that any man

of similar intelligence and honesty may hold the doctrine now as firmly as Henry VIII's chancellor held it, since our advance in science, great as it has been, scarcely served to make it more unreasonable in the nineteenth than it must have seemed to be in the sixteenth century. His process of reasoning applied to natural theology applies *a fortiori*, of course, to theology based upon what Macaulay called "revelation." "All divine truth is, according to the doctrine of the Protestant Churches, recorded in certain books. . . . A Christian of the fifth century with a Bible is neither better nor worse situated than a Christian of the nineteenth century with a Bible, candor and natural acuteness being, of course, supposed equal."

Nothing could better illustrate the transformation that the years have wrought in the Protestant attitude toward theology than the mere quotation of such a passage as the above. It is to be remembered that in writing it Macaulay hardly misrepresented the thought of his day in England and America. He perceived the Evangelical to be scarcely less bound by the traditions of the Fathers than the Tractarian, though they were of course

very different Fathers. The Nonconformist as well as the Churchman was to a considerable extent an antiquarian; and the results of his antiquarian research, so far as they had theological significance, concerned an institution known as the Church, rather than a body of truth closely related to life. The "Leben Jesu" of Strauss had been published but five years, and its author was in disgrace even in Germany. George Eliot's translation was not yet begun, nor to be issued until 1846. Few English students of theology read German, and some of those who did, read it upon the sly. And twenty years were still to pass before Colenso should precipitate the great question of the Higher Criticism of the Bible upon his unwilling countrymen.

The Unitarians kept something of the temper of the elder Maurice, whose enthusiasm we are told "went out, like that of so many others of his class, into politics rather than religion."[1] The avowed champions of unbelief had not yet revolted against the crass misrepresentations and travesties of religion which men like the elder Mill were not ashamed to perpetuate, and which, to the

[1] Tulloch, *Religious Thought in Britain*, p. 263.

amazement of later generations, seem to have been not without some influence upon the thought of his far greater son. The more intellectual among the Presbyterians and Independents were largely occupied with barren doctrinal controversy. In the realm of philosophy, students at the universities heard much talk of "progress of the species, dark ages, and the like, but the hungry young looked up to their spiritual nurses, and for food were bidden eat the east wind." [1]

It may be answered that when Macaulay wrote his "Edinburgh Review" essay on Von Ranke's "History of the Popes," from which I have quoted, a new era had been ushered in by Coleridge and Maurice, torch-bearers of the higher and richer thought of Germany. This is true, and with them should be numbered Thomas Erskine; while Wordsworth's parallel influence in the realm of poetry, and Carlyle's in the field of general literature, but especially of the ethical interpretation of history, is not to be overlooked. Maurice, the near spiritual kinsman of both Coleridge and Erskine, had but just published his "Kingdom of Christ," — it appeared in 1838, —

[1] *Sartor Resartus*, bk. ii. c. iii.; Tulloch, p. 170.

and the sub-title of this notable work, "Hints on the Principles, Ordinances, and Constitution of the Catholic Church, in Letters to a Member of the Society of Friends," reveals that institutional bent or tendency which has proven itself to be at once the strength and the limitation of so many English theologians.

Nor should the fact be overlooked that it always takes time, and what often seems to be a disproportionate and unreasonable length of time, for the results of theological investigation to find their way out of the study and the treatise into the general thought and speech of men. It is not enough to say that the man of the street does not care about such things. He probably does not care about their mere academic aspect, but in their relation to life they interest him and often interest him profoundly. It frequently happens, moreover, that the "man of letters" is among the worst informed and the least intelligent of the observers of theological and religious phenomena. Like the cockney who counts his ignorance of country ways the *cachet* of his town-bred superiority, he chooses to hold aloof from any special acquaintance

with this branch of what he very likely calls a pseudo-science. If he be a portrayer of the manners of the time, as an essayist or a novelist, he has of course a theologian among the lay figures in his studio. Occasionally he makes large use of him, profiting especially by that infirmity of position, that feebleness of "stance," to filch a word from golf, which makes him such an easy prey to the attacks of his master; for, be it observed, this figure is always set up to be overthrown. He is carefully provided beforehand with so much of the theological equipment of day before yesterday as his master's odds and ends of yesterday may suffice to vanquish. An excellent type of this sort of creature appears in the late Mr. Harold Frederic's "Theron Ware." Mrs. Humphry Ward laid him under tribute for the original of "Robert Elsmere." He it is who is periodically ground to powder when Professor Goldwin Smith essays Old Testament topics; while the man who clamors from time to time in the newspapers and magazines for a "prayer-test" would find his occupation gone without him.

The contention of Macaulay with reference to theology is only another case in point.

Though tricked out in seemly dress enough, it was in reality nothing less than a damning accusation, and none could have known better than he that the doom of theology as a fit subject for the consideration of intelligent men would be sounded if he should succeed in substantiating his claim. Nor is this the less true because many theologians of the most orthodox type would have rejoiced to agree with him; for the ultimate nature of a current theological system has been a favorite premiss of the most devout believers as well as the most cynical scoffers, though they have reasoned from it to utterly diverse conclusions. Indeed, among those who read this essay was very likely one man of thirty-nine from whom Macaulay's contention would have won a glad assent, — a man whose efforts in behalf of the dependent classes in English society were just beginning to assume influential proportions, and who was one day to be counted among the most significant and beneficent forces in the social life of the century. The pronounced evangelicalism of Lord Ashley, better known to the world as the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, was of precisely the type that dreaded theological change, and was pre-

pared to deny the possibility of any appreciable theological development, while it reverenced theology as the mother of sciences. Though Lord Shaftesbury never laid claim to the gift of tongues, he possessed one tongue whose facility, eloquence, and occasional acerbity made it quite equal to the work of many. "I have not," said he on one occasion, "that faculty for mild speech which distinguishes some persons in this country." [1] He justified the confession by characterizing "Ecce Homo" as "the most pestilential book ever vomited from the jaws of hell." [2] He "loathed with the utmost abhorrence" Colenso's book, even while with characteristic high-mindedness he protested against Bishop Gray's summary methods of disciplining its author.[3] He called heaven to witness how absolutely he abhorred the theology of Jowett,[4] though he would not put him down by dishonoring his office. Perhaps most significant of all was his letter to Pusey during the "Essays and Reviews" controversy, in which he said: "Time, space, and divergent opinions have separated

[1] Edwin Hodder, *The Life and Work of the Earl of Shaftesbury, K. G.*, iii. 160.

[2] Id. p. 164. [3] Id. p. 168. [4] Id. i. 170.

us for many years. . . . We will fight about those *another day;* in this 'we must contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints;' and it must be done together now."[1]

Yet at this very period, though neither Macaulay nor Shaftesbury was clear eyed enough to discern the signs of its advent, an era of theological development was opening which in its ultimate results is likely to prove to be the most significant since the Reformation. The day of the barren deistic rationalist of the eighteenth century was past. The Evangelical Revival as a revival had practically spent its force, though its substantial fruits remained. The German leaven was at work. Schleiermacher, who died in 1834, was still little but a name to most Englishmen and Americans, with the exception of such as knew their Coleridge well. But his interpreters were at the door. The ethics of Kant were receiving practical application to the problems of life at the hands of Carlyle, and coming to such men as Froude like a new gospel.

[1] Edwin Hodder, *The Life and Work of the Earl of Shaftesbury, K. G.*, iii. 166.

With respect to Hegel and his influence the case was somewhat different. There is a story that Comte once expressed a half-petulant wish that Hegel would publish a little book summing up his philosophy "succinctly and in French;" to which the great philosopher replied that his system was capable of expression "ni succinctement, ni en français." The saying, though doubtless apocryphal, is none the less significant. The practical Englishman with his institutional tendency was not very likely to become a student of so great and abstruse a system, and still less likely to become its apostle. In Germany upon the appearance of Hegel's philosophy, "Theology," as a distinguished critic has said, "was happy at the supreme good fortune that had come to her, — her ability to speak in her own tongue the thoughts of her old enemy."[1] But among English-speaking peoples the practical theological outcome of the Hegelian philosophy has long been closely associated with the work of Strauss. Strauss has been cleverly characterized as the Frankenstein of Hegelianism. He was its unnatural by-product, — made, not begotten; and he has

[1] Fairbairn, *Christ in Theology*, p. 222.

perhaps done more than any other writer to bring German influence in theology under suspicion among the mass of British and American Christians. Even at this late day great numbers of intelligent persons, to whom the works of Baur and his Tübingen brethren are sealed books, know the name and dread the power of Hegel. Of the real and abiding service to the faith which the Tübingen school rendered in compelling the adoption of a new and scientific historical method in theology they know nothing. Shaftesbury and Pusey, with the multitudes for whom they stood, when they thought of theological development, beheld it branded with the mark of the Teutonic Beast.

In America the situation was apparently though not essentially different. The ultra-Calvinism of the Fathers had from its very nature compelled "improvement." It was a perpetual challenge to men's reason. There was a haunting power about it quite distinct from its almost regal place among the systems, that forbade its contemptuous or cavalier rejection. Its preëminent qualities fascinated as well as repelled the student. Hence arose endless more or less successful tamperings

with it. It stood like some vast structure, — a *tour de force* of other days, — ill adapted to the needs of the present, but too splendid to be destroyed; though its interior might be remodeled, and so many minor changes wrought upon its outside as to tone down its pristine ruggedness and, it must be added, belittle its original majesty. So in almost every generation after Edwards there was a new school to which a newer school succeeded.

Thus the general notion of theological change and development was less strange to the men of New than to those of Old England. But it is to be noted that it was change within definite limits. The content of revelation was fixed. There was a certain sum of truth delivered to men. It might be rearranged. Deeper research might result in the discovery of heretofore hidden things. The immediate limits of the mine in which it was man's privilege to delve might be unknown to him, but they were none the less limits, precisely as a "coal measure" may reach for an indeterminate distance into a mountain-side, but still be defined by the general shape and size of the mountain. There was an academic assent given to Robinson's historic dictum

that more truth might yet break out from the Word of God, but it was a rather hard saying even when the Word of God to men was supposed to be altogether included within the covers of a book. In short, the present dispensation was generally admitted to be an *ordo ordinatus* rather than an *ordo ordinans*.

Here and there, to be sure, a voice was raised in protest; none clearer or braver than Horace Bushnell's. Yet in a singular sense Bushnell stood

> "Between two worlds, — one dead,
> The other powerless to be born."

He reminds us of those souls in Tintoretto's great Judgment Scene who, though arisen, are not yet wholly risen. The bars of their earthly prison-house have burst and they are living in the free upper air, but not yet unhampered by the clods. This is in no sense to belittle Bushnell's place or work. Had he cut loose from all that was temporary in the thought of his day, it is possible that our debt to him might have been less rather than greater. For in the literal rather than the tropical sense, Bushnell's work has proven itself to be profoundly conservative. His

greatness is the substantial greatness of the reinterpreter, the rebuilder, and the reformer, rather than the notoriety of the mere revolutionist. Had he held a different view of the Fall, for instance, his ability to interpret the significance of the Atonement might conceivably have been diminished rather than increased. Had he foreseen the significance of the new doctrine of Evolution, it is doubtful if his message to the men of his day with reference to Nature and the Supernatural would have been so intelligible and uplifting. While had he undertaken to grapple with the modern science of Biblical Criticism, he would have found it hard work to convince those about him that there was any common ground for them to stand on.

As things were, he found, to quote the luminous words of his latest biographer, that "relief was needed at four points: first, from a revivalism that ignored the law of Christian growth; second, from a conception of the Trinity bordering on tritheism; third, from a view of miracles that implied a suspension of natural law; and fourth, from a theory of the Atonement that had grown almost shadowy under 'improvements,' yet still failed to

declare the law of human life. The time had also come when a rational, scientific, cause-and-effect habit of thought was imperatively required, not only on these four points, but in the whole realm of theology." [1]

Now it is preëminently such a "rational, scientific, cause-and-effect habit of thought" that has been exerting its influence upon every branch of human knowledge during the six decades since Macaulay assured the world of 1840 that theology was not a progressive science. It has been very learnedly and plausibly contended that the theological temper has always been either implicitly or overtly hostile to scientific progress; and the contention voices one of those half truths which deceive quite as many as they instruct. The warfare that has seemed to exist between Theology and Science has really been a conflict between institutionalism and science. It is the priest who has laboriously and painfully reared the walls and completed the roof of his particular system, often at expense of utmost personal sacrifice be it remembered, to whom the structural change that accompanies natural growth seems dreadful. There has been

[1] T. T. Munger, *Horace Bushnell*, p. 387.

no provision for it in his plan. So when the prophet comes to tell him either in the name of religion or of natural science that his whole structural system is wrong, and must continue to be wrong until he ceases to do violence to the organic by classing it with the inorganic, he is incontinently met with bell, book, and candle. Yet the prophet is no less a theologian than the priest; nay, in most instances he is the greater and the more perspicacious theologian, in so far as he sees the subject-matter of his science to be living and continuous rather than dead and completed revelation. It would be quite possible, too, to counter upon those who maintain that science has always found theology at odds with it by two equally plausible contentions. One is that a vast number of the discoveries whereby scientific advance has been accomplished have been made possible by those very systems of education and schools of learning which the church and priesthood have always fostered. The other is that it is to the theological implications of his scientific hypotheses that the investigator often owes no small part of the popular interest which it is to his advantage to arouse.

Swedenborg, for instance, anticipated in his mystical way the nebular hypothesis. Kant, as early as 1755, gave it form and practically established its scientific basis. Here was the doctrine of evolution in embryo, waiting for general application throughout the whole realm of human thought. But it attracted comparatively little interest among those multitudes, the horizon of whose intelligence it was finally to broaden so wonderfully, until Darwin had formulated the theory of Natural Selection, and his disciples began to expound what they supposed to be its theological significance. Then the world of plain people began to attend to the new teaching. A feeling went abroad that here was something to be dealt with, pro or con; and the result has been of the greatest possible moment. Darwin, to be sure, carefully avoided this phase of the discussion. But Tyndall and Huxley and Clifford welcomed it so heartily that it is scarcely too much to say that they are known as theologians by many who would be sorely puzzled to tell whether or not they had rendered any considerable service to pure science; while in America great numbers of intelligent people would forever remain in ignorance of Pro-

fessor John Fiske's special contribution to the doctrine of evolution, had he not wisely and suggestively expounded it in certain little theological treatises that found their thousands of readers while his "Cosmic Philosophy" was waiting for its hundreds.

Returning now for the moment to Macaulay's thesis, we may fairly reduce it to this syllogism. Systems of thought which are constitutionally intolerant of development are doomed to extinction. Theology is thus constitutionally intolerant of development. Therefore theology is doomed to extinction. It is, however, only in the light of the evolutionary notion of life as a perpetual adaptation to environment that we reach this conclusion. Macaulay by no means went so far. He seems to have felt instinctively that some provision must be made for the ineradicable tendency of men to cherish superstition; and this provision he believed that the Church of Rome might still be found to furnish when the ruins of St. Paul's should adorn the sketch-books of cultivated New Zealand travelers. His difficulty lay in accepting his own major premiss; the minor constituted his principal contention. Our difficulty lies with the minor;

the major we are coming to regard as almost axiomatic. It is quite true that the change of position has been made unwillingly, and that multitudes of honest folk have contended that a theological system which was capable of development could not really interpret eternal truth to the minds and hearts of men. But that is only to say that theology has not found herself exempt from the same hard conditions that have forced reconstruction in every other field of human thought. She has, like astronomy and anthropology and medicine, been forced to discover some practicable path of progress between the rocks of dogmatism and the gulf of superstition. It is useless to deny that there is any such path, and to claim that the man who searches for it is bound to find, like the victim of Poe's "Pit and Pendulum" adventure, that the wall is so arranged as of necessity to thrust him who would fain creep about its foot into the abyss. The human mind will not consent to be thus put to confusion. Comte essayed a hopeless task when he undertook to convince the world that the themes which had in all ages fascinated some of the greatest men were not germane to the human intellect; and

that it was the part of the true philosopher to relegate them to the limbo of chimeras. The dogmatism of negation is even more antipathetic to the mass of men than the dogmatism of assertion. Nothing can be more profoundly unscientific than an *a priori* denial of religious experience, or an unwillingness to give candid and unbiased attention to religious phenomena. Nor can anything bring true science into greater contempt than the refusal to regard the investigation of these phenomena and the generalizations which such investigation appears to justify, as worthy of the best thought and endeavor which men can bring to the task; unless, indeed, it be an assumption upon the theologian's part that all the significant facts in his particular realm have been discovered; that investigation, except for the purposes of rearrangement, is therefore futile; that the content of his budget of premisses is fixed; and that his true work is merely to manipulate them in accordance with the well-worn processes of a deductive logic.

It is my purpose in the chapters which follow to state a condition; to propound a question; and to suggest an answer. Condi-

tion, question, and answer all have their theological implications. But the theological substructure which they imply appears to me to be in no sense a finished product. Christianity is not a completed system gloriously fashioned after the similitude of a temple, but an organism instinct with the power of an endless life. Its helpful application to the affairs of men depends less upon the discovery of some architectonic plan, than upon acquaintance with the power and principle of its development. In our reverent search after this Dynamic of Christianity we shall first look at the theological, religious, and social conditions amid which it is at work.

II

THE ZEITGEIST

THE reader will remember that on the evening after Faust's compact with Mephistopheles he sat down to translate the prologue of St. John's Gospel into German. This, by reason of the compact, had become a forbidden occupation, and he was at once interrupted by the howling of his dog, in whom just then his evil genius chanced to be embodied; but not until he had opportunity to begin debate with himself upon the great question which the prologue raises.

"'T is writ, 'In the Beginning was the Word!'
I pause, perplexed! Who now will help afford?
I cannot the mere word so highly prize;
I must translate it otherwise,
If by the Spirit guided as I read.
'In the Beginning was the Sense!' Take heed.
The import of this primal sentence weigh,
Lest thy too hasty pen be led astray!
Is force creative then of Sense the dower?
'In the Beginning was the Power!'
Thus should it stand: yet while the line I trace,

A something warns me, once more to efface.
The Spirit aids! from anxious scruples freed,
I write, 'In the Beginning was the Deed!'"
Faust, part i. 876–89, Swanwick's trans.

It is a tribute to the prophetic element in Goethe's genius that as early as 1808 — and very probably a score of years earlier — he should thus have made Faust forecast the philosophical temper of the nineteenth century. It has been eminently critical in its attitude toward received opinion in every department of life; and it has often chosen to deal with phenomena as though they were ultimate realities. The "thing in itself" in the scientific thought of the century has been the Deed rather than the Word or the Power. I do not mean, of course, that outside the school of Comte men have chosen to defend this as a thesis; but they have been willing to accept it as a rule of life and thought.

Their experience, however, has not been satisfying. As the century grew old, it became increasingly evident that they could never rest in Faust's position, though they might sojourn there for a time. A somewhat larger view of the sphere and scope of man has been accepted. Phenomenon though he

be, set amid kindred phenomena, there is still noumenon-stuff in him. Something in his personality bespeaks his kinship with the Power behind the Deed — the Reason which the Word utters. As the shallower and more materialistic scientific doctrine of the first three quarters of the century was forecast by Goethe in criticising the prologue of St. John, so the deeper and more vital faith of its later years has been suggested by Browning in his comment upon the prologue of Genesis.

"I find first
Writ down for very A B C of fact,
'In the Beginning God made heaven and earth;'
From which, no matter with what lisp, I spell
And speak you out a consequence — that man,
Man, — as befits the made, the inferior thing, —
Purposed, since made, to grow, not make in turn,
Yet forced to try and make, else fail to grow, —
Formed to rise, reach at, if not grasp and gain
The good beyond him, — which attempt is growth, —
Repeats God's process in man's due degree,
Attaining man's proportionate result, —
Creates, no, but resuscitates perhaps."

The Ring and the Book — Prologue.

The contrast between these utterances of two great interpreters of life separated by fourscore years is even more significant than at once appears. It extends to the manner as well as the matter of their prophecy. Goethe's

word is graceful, but hollow and cynical. It is the message of one who has compassed life in its length and breadth only to find it of more than doubtful quality — worth beautifying and bedecking, perhaps, but to be adorned as a stage is adorned that a play may be elaborately produced. He says in effect to man,

> "Thou 'rt after all — just what thou art,
> Put on thy head a wig with countless locks,
> Raise to a cubit's height thy learned socks,
> Still thou remainest ever — what thou art."
> *Faust*, part i. 1451–4, Swanwick's trans.

Browning is as negligent of the Graces as Goethe is worshipful toward them. His style is as chaotic as that of his predecessor is orderly and finished. But the attitude of the man himself is ever prophetic and expectant. He looks to see things come to pass, and summons men to the exercise of their high prerogative of putting compulsion upon events. The very ruggedness of his method seems to reflect the abundance of the unorganized material which he sees lying in rough masses about him, waiting the constructive genius of the architect, bravely seconded as he would have it by the honest handiwork of the mason. Indeed, the relation and the contrast between

the two poets are not unlike those which a very acute critic has discerned to exist between the Italian Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation. The outlook of the former is toward culture, the exercise and enjoyment of balanced and regulated faculty; that of the latter toward religion, the genesis of new beliefs as to God and man, and the impulse to embody them in action.[1]

It is not to be denied that the theological situation as it faced us at last century's end was primarily suggestive of chaos. The Zeitgeist had proved to be no respecter of great theological names or systems; and those who have rejoiced to see the wreck of time-honored structures, or who have lifted up their voices to prophesy the passing of theology altogether from the sphere of rational human interest, have seemed able to enroll Time and the Hour among their allies. Two very stubborn facts, however, have maintained their ground amid the confusion. One is that the general subject-matter of theology — the raw material with which it deals — appears to possess permanent interest for men. They may grow weary of the theological terminology of

[1] Fairbairn, *Christ in Theology*, p. 137.

their day, and in their disgust fancy that in throwing it away they dispose of the problems which it inadequately expresses. Yet in another form the problems recur. It is a far cry from Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad to Professor John Fiske. But the challenge which the existence of evil issues to the New England evolutionist is just as compelling as it ever was to the creator of the great Idumean sheik and his three friends. Between an Alexandrian Neo-Platonist of the third century and a Bampton lecturer at the end of the nineteenth, great gulfs of experience would seem to be fixed; yet the human soul puts the same question to Mr. Inge that it asked Plotinus.[1]

The other fact is that no great and influential principle ever finds its way into the thought of men without exciting immediate interest as to its theological implications. If theological systems be in vogue, there is, as was suggested in the Introduction, an anxious canvassing of each new principle and theory to determine its bearings with reference to the accepted modes of thought. If, on the other hand, systems totter, and perhaps require more substantiation at the hands of

[1] Cf. Inge, *Christian Mysticism.*

faith than they furnish to it, hope springs eternal that the new truth may either revitalize the old categories, or furnish a sufficient reason for their abandonment by supplying better ones.

Probably these principles have never been better illustrated than in the changes that have been wrought through the general acceptance of the theory of development, as it has found scientific expression during the last fifty years. There seemed at first to be no limit to the ravages which it might commit among the systems. It set at naught the old notion of cataclysmic creation. It did not appear to comport well with the Idea of Divinity generally held in Western Christendom. The whole universe conceived as an elaborate machine seemed to be thrown out of gear by the introduction of this new theory of it. Law bade fair to usurp the place of God. Method was apotheosized. There was no place for revelation. The supernatural was bound to become an outworn term. Miracle was not to be thought of in an orderly universe. All experience would eventually be expressed in terms of the material, and if behind the visible frame of things some ultimate force had

to be posited, the most that we were permitted to say of it was that it was unknowable, and the largest concession that could be made to the childishness of those whose heart and flesh still cried out for a living God was to print the Unknowable with a capital initial. The brain was fitted to secrete thought as the liver secreted bile; though if, by chance, so-called religious thought were secreted, it was a sort of by-product not to be counted to the brain's credit. Christianity was a mere passing way-mark of human immaturity. The Church was engaged in an immoral calling while it countenanced the teaching of religion as touching ultimate realities. Society was helpless in the grasp of Evolution, and the Survival of the Fittest, like a nineteenth century Minotaur, contradicted every holiest instinct of the human heart by demanding its tale of victims, not from the fair and beautiful, but from the weak and dependent.

It was some such prospect as this that the Gospel of Evolution spread before the eyes of multitudes of men when it was first preached by advocates who had but a meagre conception of its philosophical foundations. Men heard, and found themselves in a strait be-

twixt two. The more intelligent among them were quick to perceive that a great truth had been discovered. They could not fail to respond instinctively to its appeal. But multitudes also perceived quite as instinctively that, as at first expounded, it was likely to put them to permanent intellectual confusion. Its advocates seemed to contradict as much experience as they amplified and explained. Hence it followed that men everywhere took sides with reference to it, some blindly, and some intelligently and hopefully. From this very fact the new principle proved to be a disturbing, sometimes apparently a disintegrating, element among the systems of thought. Here it threatened destruction; there it inspired a hope of reconstruction. The more intimately the vital interests of men were concerned, the more profound and painful was the agitation.

Now the mutual relations of natural science and theology at the time of the promulgation of the theory of development were of a sort to render each somewhat antipathetic to the other. Theology as a science had been hampered and confined through its subservience, or supposed subservience, to an institution. In all Roman Catholic and in most Protestant

lands it was under some authority other than that of a simple law of truth, and was forced to square its conclusions, if it could, not merely with the spirit, but with the form of dogma, — dogma being in too many cases unscientific dogma, based less upon observation than upon a process of deduction from inadequate premisses. Theology was so occupied with the Whence and the Whither and the Why of life that it was much too contemptuous of the When, the Where, and the How. It was entirely honest in its intent to go down deep and to reach up high; but it was careless of a great deal of truth which, near at hand and close to earth, seemed too commonplace for intimate relation to its lofty purposes.

Natural Science in its revival dealt eagerly with just this truth. It found a vast field for its energies. Investigation there proved so rich and fruitful that the scope of science was mightily enlarged. With the key of the theory of development at hand, Nature's cipher was translated at a surprising rate. Answers to the scientist's questions of When, Where, and How poured forth in such abundance, that he and his disciples were fain to pull down

their old treasuries and build greater, assured that here were all the goods they needed for indefinite future sustenance. They were severely condemnatory of the theologian who had missed these things; contemptuous, if he failed to share their enthusiasm at the new meanings which they now saw all about them; not a little restive, too, that he should continue to insist that other things still existed, and that their new-found principle might prove to be, after all, proximate rather than ultimate.

To this period of open warfare or armed neutrality between the biologist and the theologian a calmer mood has succeeded. A suspicion seems to have been born in the heart of each that his neighbor's contentions may be quite as likely to represent the complement as the contrary of his own. In point of fact, leading Protestant theologians have proven to be far more complaisant than the naturalists here. The wisest of them have shown themselves entirely hospitable to the theory of development. They had learned, however, by a more or less bitter experience, that every great principle "which is seized with rapture by the imagination and imperfectly apprehended by the rea-

son"[1] may, even though true in itself, lead men in the wrong direction. The shallower and less philosophical naturalists have therefore sometimes been inclined to taunt the theologians with their change of front in face of what threatened to be the assaults of the evolutionists. But it always remains for the Protestant to reply that his apparent change of front in face of evolutionary advance has been in no sense because he saw in it a new foe about to attack him in flank; it has been rather the rearrangement of position necessitated by the accession of considerable reinforcements. It has been made not without some unfortunate confusion, to be sure, not without some suspicion and unwillingness here and there, but it has been made, for all that. Moreover, the true Protestant rejoices in his ability to make it. Such power of adaptation is an essential attribute, he believes, of a really scientific theology. He is inclined to answer the taunt of the naturalist as Leibnitz answered Bossuet, when the latter asked him whether he could find a way to hinder the Protestant Churches from being eternally variable: "It suits us, Monseigneur, to be-

[1] Allen, *Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 412.

long to this moving and eternally variable Church."

The century closed before this confusion had entirely resolved itself into order. Yet it has left theology expectant. Men are filled with a large assurance that when the new alignment shall be effected, it will make the defense of the old sacred places more impregnable than ever. Of course one does not have to go far to find the grumbler and the man who sighs for the old systems and the old watchwords; which is only to say that the Great Twin Brethren, Tradition and Custom, find as many worshipers among theologians as among soldiers and sailors. It may properly enough be asked, however, what definite grounds there are for this more confident and expectant attitude of the theologian. I am content to designate four or five of the many that might be indicated.

1. As the apostles of the Doctrine of Development have thought themselves through, have come, that is, to see the real range and scope of their own hypothesis, they have tacitly if not explicitly recognized the theologian's rights, even though they may not like his name. Whether he find it a hard or easy

task to give the world a reason for the particular faith that is in him, his *raison d'être* is scarcely in need of defense to-day.

Men like the late John Fiske and G. J. Romanes have borne distinct testimony to this fact. Professor Fiske, as was intimated in the Introduction, himself became a theologian of note. Mr. Romanes, with a frankness so admirable that it ought never to be abused by any claim that he was made the captive of Canon Gore's[1] orthodox spear and bow, has set down in black and white the record of his own experience. The story of his renunciation of his faith at the supposed demand of biology and its implications has become classic.

"And forasmuch as I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the 'new faith' is a desirable substitute for the waning splendour of 'the old,' I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept to 'work while it is day' will doubtless but gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'the night cometh

[1] Now Bishop of Worcester.

when no man can work,' yet when at times I think, as at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, — at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For whether it be due to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements of the age, or whether it be due to the memory of those sacred associations which to me at least were the sweetest that life has given, I cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton, — Philosophy, having become a meditation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, the precept *Know thyself* has become transformed into the terrific oracle to Œdipus: —

"'Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art.'" [1]

These words must have been written as early as 1876.[2] At his death in 1894 the same writer left a further record to this effect: —

[1] Romanes, *Thoughts on Religion*, Ed. Pref., p. 29.

[2] The *Candid Examination of Theism*, in the concluding chapter of which these words occur, was published in 1878,

"I take it then as unquestionably true that this whole negative side of the subject proves a vacuum in the soul of man which nothing can fill save faith in God. Now take the positive side. Consider the happiness of religious — and chiefly of the highest religious, i. e. Christian — belief. It is a matter of fact that besides being most intense, it is most enduring, growing, and never staled by custom. In short, according to the universal testimony of those who have it, it differs from all other happiness not only in degree but in kind. Those who have it can usually testify to what they used to be without it. . . . So much for the individual. But positive evidence does not end here. Look at the effects of Christian belief as exercised on human society — first, by individual Christians on the family, etc.; and, second, by the Christian Church on the world. All this may lead on to an argument from the adaptation of Christianity to human higher needs. All men must feel these needs more or less in proportion as their higher

but written, the author says, "several years ago." "I have refrained from publishing it," he remarks, "lest after having done so, I should find that more mature thoughts had modified the conclusions which the author sets forth."

Thoughts on Religion, p. 9, note.

natures, moral and spiritual, are developed. Now Christianity is the only religion which is adapted to meet them and, according to those who are alone able to testify, it does so most abundantly. All these men, of every sect, nationality, etc., agree in their account of their subjective experience; so as to this there can be no question. The only question is as to whether they were all deceived."

A little further on he quotes two sets of quatrains with the following comment: —

"'La vie est vaine :
Un peu d'amour,
Un peu de haine —
Et puis — bon jour !

"'La vie est brève :
Un peu d'espoir,
Un peu de rêve —
Et puis — bon soir !'

"The above is a terse and true criticism of this life without hope of a future one. Is it satisfactory? But Christian faith as a matter of fact changes it entirely.

"'The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one ;
Yet the light of a whole world dies
With the setting sun.

"'The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.'" [1]

Friedrich Nietzsche — one of the very few really consistent atheists the last century knew, most consistent, perhaps, in the insanity to which he logically followed his negations — would have said that this changed attitude of Romanes was only the working out of the poison of Christianity with which he was prenatally tainted. But in point of fact, as Newman was said to have "lived over again in his experience the course of Latin History," [2] so Romanes illustrated in his brief but busy life the experience of nineteenth century theology. I have quoted from him at considerable length, less because I am just now concerned to substantiate or to use his conclusions, than because he exemplifies so well my contention that the facts of religion and the rational treatment of them which is the essence of theology have a real claim upon intelligent men.

2. Another substantiation of the more expectant and reasonably confident attitude of

[1] Romanes, *Thoughts on Religion*, pp. 162–3.
[2] Allen, *Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 412.

theology during the last few years is found in its larger recognition and adoption of the historic method.[1] Herein it has half unwittingly come into closer touch with physical science, and their mutual antipathy has lessened proportionately. Moreover, in the pursuit of its historical researches, theology has found in the development hypothesis an unexpectedly clever and devoted coadjutor. The evolution key unlocks doors in theology as elsewhere which had before seemed hopeless.

The principle of continuity has long been recognized as becoming to Theism. It comports with a belief in an omniscient, omnipresent, and ever-working God. Without it there is grave danger lest a man's God prove too small for his world. The heart and flesh of man do not cry out for a demiurge occasionally breaking in upon the world of his creation with cataclysmic interruption of its order; but for a living God, able and willing to sustain by inherent vital force an organism which He planted and which He still

[1] Cf. Addresses of Professor Alexander Gosman and Professor G. P. Fisher, International Congregational Council, Boston, 1899, *Proceedings of Council.*

nurtures. As the principle of continuity comports well with Theism and in a sense distinguishes it from mere Deism, so the Doctrine of Evolution is but one application of this principle in the sphere of creative method. It contradicts no first principle essential to theology's existence. It explains much. It promises to explain more.

3. Still again, theology has discovered that some of the implications of the development hypothesis which its more dogmatic expositors once proclaimed to be destructive of theological positions have really substantiated them. The Gibeonites who were feared as spoilers in the distance become hewers of wood and drawers of water when we really enter their land. There is perhaps no better illustration of this than that offered by the treatment which evolution has accorded to the doctrine of final causes. It threatened to rule Paley's argument from design, illustrated by the watch found upon a desert shore, out of court altogether; not so much because it was fundamentally false as because it was altogether inadequate. In thus confounding Paley a certain school of evolutionists seemed to think that all teleology was forever put to

confusion. It only remained for another and wiser school to show that the old argument from design was meagre rather than false, and that it failed because it undertook to express a vital process in mechanical terms. As time has passed, a larger place has been found for teleology than the old doctrine of final causes ever dared to claim. There is a significant note in Romanes' "Thoughts on Religion" to the effect that in a projected book he must show how much better a treatise Butler might have written had he known about evolution,[1] and he might have included Paley and the essayists of the Bridgewater Treatises in the same category.

4. Then, finally, there is the confidence of the practical Christianity of the time. The Church at large, though, as I shall show in a later chapter, her confessions of faith, her polities, and her practical activities are all more or less confused and ill-coördinated, is still vigorous with the vigor of healthful and hopeful even though untrained youth. The Church in the broad sense is not a decadent institution, though she may sometimes seem to be a distracted one. She is quick still —

[1] *Thoughts on Religion*, p. 182.

perhaps quicker than ever before — to hear and heed the voice of the prophet.

The century just closed has been characterized in an extraordinary degree by organization under the general inspiration and direction of the Christian Church. Confining our view to Anglo-Saxon Protestantism, we may see four great organized movements which, during the century, have enlisted the gifts and the services of millions of Christians. One of these is the Sunday-school. Its inception by Robert Raikes in Gloucester, England, belongs to the eighteenth century, but the real adaptation of the institution to the purposes of the Church is of the nineteenth. On the American continent to-day there are nearly 150,000 of these schools, with 1,500,000 officers and teachers and about 12,000,000 pupils.

A second significant organization arose in the middle of the century with the founding of the first Young Men's Christian Association. This was followed in due time by the Young Women's Christian Association. One or both of these associations may now be found in more than forty countries, enrolling 250,000 men and nearly 40,000 women.

In 1881 an organization known as the Society of Christian Endeavor came into being. It seemed to have peculiar pertinence to conditions then existent in most Protestant churches. Expanding with astonishing rapidity, it came to represent in the closing years of the century 56,000 affiliated societies, with a membership of 3,400,000.[1]

Meanwhile the Church has felt such an access of missionary zeal as has not been known since the first three centuries. The Christian missionary has penetrated into all quarters of the globe. He has come to represent a vital world-movement. Almost every branch of natural science, as well as anthropology, philology, geography, ethics, and comparative religion is under obligation to him; while his intimate acquaintance with religious thought abroad has reacted with telling power upon religious thought at home. All future historians must reckon with him and his work.

It is beside my present purpose to ask whether these manifestations of Christian vitality have been wisely inaugurated or are being directed to beneficent ends. I

[1] C. E. Jefferson, Address, International Congregational Council, Boston, 1899, *Proceedings of Council*, p. 308.

am simply calling attention to them as phenomena, indicative of vast stores of energy gladly subject to the direction of religious impulse. It is perfectly idle to attempt to explain them away as manifestations of mere passing sentiment. They speak of willing gifts, devoted lives, deliberate intentions, and often consummately able leadership. These are only examples from a great and ever increasing store of similar organized activities. They represent the emphasis which the Church, following Faust's suggestion, has during these years been placing upon the *Deed*.

The Church thus vigorous in act — more vigorous, perhaps, than in any other century of her history — has a right to ask the theologian for some unifying and coördinating principle for the satisfaction of her mind and the guidance of her ever developing vitality. That some such principle exists she feels instinctively. There is too much Doing all the time to permit a doubt as to the existence of some Power behind the Deed, and some Dynamic which shall set forth the order and method of its working. It is when the Church puts this question to the world that she becomes aware of the extent in which Doing

has outrun Thinking in the century's life, and of the more or less incoherent state of the average man's thought upon the great and closely related subjects of theology, religion, and social life.

I shall attempt in the three succeeding chapters to sketch the present state of popular thought upon these themes, with a view to discover, if possible, some common principle which, even though generally unrecognized, may still aid us in our search for the Dynamic of Christianity.

III

THE PRESENT STATE OF POPULAR THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT

"But, Sir," said Boswell to Johnson in a famous endeavor to defend the Presbyterians against that prejudiced worthy, "their doctrine is the same with that of the Church of England. Their Confession of Faith and the Thirty-Nine Articles contain the same points, even the doctrine of Predestination." "Why, yes, Sir," answered Johnson, "predestination was a part of the clamour of the times, so it is mentioned in our articles, but with as little positiveness as could be."[1]

Johnson's prejudice, portentous as its proportions often were, was never able altogether to vanquish his good sense and keenness of vision; and in that phrase "the clamour of the times," he hit upon one secret of the stranger forms which theological speech has sometimes used. He was only saying in his ponderous

[1] *Boswell's Johnson*, Hill's ed., ii. 119.

but still trenchant way, that there has been a fashion in theology as in almost every other department of science and philosophy.

The general appeal to the Doctrine of Evolution and the insistence upon its recognition in every discussion of the day is due in some measure to the clamor of our time. This is in no sense to disparage it. It is only to say that it is to the fore to-day as the principle of the sovereignty of God was to the fore in the heyday of Calvinism, and that it is liable to a similarly exaggerated application. For better, for worse, all our theological thinking has to reckon with it. Just at present, however, we stand at a point where its substantiation of the main positions of theology is much more apparent to the man of the schools than to the man of the street. The former has generally recognized the need of a reorganization of system and is hopefully expectant. The latter, slow to give up the old to which he has become habituated, is yet doubtful whether he may not be forced to give it up. As a system, he has grown accustomed to uphold or to antagonize it, and were it to crumble he would miss it equally in either case; for it is a truism of experience that one misses an old and

cherished antagonist little less than an old and cherished friend. In some cases where purely religious questions give him little trouble, the prospect of an overturn of his theology causes him keen distress. The shallow observer advises him to forswear all theological speculation and rule theology out of the circle of his thought, sufficing his soul with simple religious observance. But it will not do. One man may heed the advice, but his fellow instinctively feels its false quality, and is dissatisfied to leave the ranges of his soul unexplored and unmapped, while science is reducing to order his knowledge of other spheres of activity. He instinctively believes this exploration to be a legitimate function of the human reason. His experience of other lines of investigation leads him further to believe that, for exploration here, he needs some guiding principle which shall render experience coherent, and to the test of which he may subject his hypotheses. It is just this principle, however, that is notably lacking; and the lack seems all the more pitiable inasmuch as recent monistic tendencies in science give renewed force to the demand that such high matters as sin, righteousness, and char-

acter be treated, not as mere names or concepts, but as realities.[1]

In illustration of this lack of system in the theological thinking of Christian people today, one need only interrogate the men or women of somewhat more than average intelligence who comprise the bulk of the membership of our Christian churches. In talking with a man of this company, intelligent and well acquainted as he generally is with the world, — all the better and more deeply acquainted often because his acquaintance is mellowed and sweetened by his benevolence, — one is still struck by the fact that he is a dualist, and somewhat restless and puzzled by reason of his dualism. Ormuzd and Ahriman are ever with him, bidding for his suffrage in life's intellectual as well as moral contests. While he believes that God is in His World, still there is antinomy between natural and supernatural. The world activities are not merely distinct from, they are opposed to, the divine activities.

To take a concrete illustration, the so-called law of gravitation is, in his thought of it, quite divorced from the divine working,

[1] Cf. art. "Theology," in Johnson's *Universal Encyclopedia*.

except as God may use it as He might use any other device or instrument. The law itself may very likely seem to him to be a concrete entity, to which he ascribes certain personal attributes, making it in reality a kind of demiurge. He continually speaks as though the law accounted for events, and as though having been referred to the law, there was no room, or at least no need, for any reference to God. As a believer he is bound to hold to God's supremacy over this and all laws, but the supremacy is that of a foreign dynasty over a conquered realm; and it is manifest most clearly in what are supposed to be its interferences with the law's normal working. Between Nature and the Supernatural there seems to be a great gulf fixed. Everything that comes into the category of ordinary experience he assigns to the realm of the natural; the supernatural lies, he would very likely say, beyond his personal experience. He believes in it, but bases his belief on hearsay evidence. His heart cries out for the supernatural as somewhere existent and somehow manifest, but it is existent in other times and manifest to other men; not to him while in his present pilgrimage. He is prone to

think of miracle as a breach in the natural order; and the thought of a breach in the natural order gives such a wrench to what he supposes to be his scientific habit of mind as to require all his faith to substantiate it. Indeed, if by common consent all belief in miracles should fall into abeyance, he would think his faith relieved of an incubus.

This antinomy between his conception of natural and supernatural extends itself to the realms of the rational and spiritual. If he could find standing-room beside Whichcote when he wrote to Tuckney, "Sir, I oppose not rational to spiritual, for spiritual is most rational," [1] it would be to look out upon a world of vastly broader horizon, and one far better fitted than his present world for the habitation of reasonable beings; but in many cases such a possibility never presents itself to him.

In his thought upon the Bible, the Christian man of this type often regards the divine and human agencies in its composition as mutually exclusive, and, feeling instinctively the presence of the divine, his doctrine of Sacred Scripture is extremely inhospitable to the human; while his neighbor, who is not

[1] Quoted by Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 20.

quite willing to be counted a Christian, recognizing as instinctively the human element, and being possessed of the same dualistic philosophy, is equally inhospitable to the divine. Both very likely agree in their contention that except the Bible be infallible, it cannot be inspired; if there prove to be a considerable legendary element in Genesis, it is therefore by so much unfitted for its supposed religious office; and except the unity of the Isaiah prophecies and the exact historicity of Jonah be accepted, then Isaiah and Jonah can have no legitimate place in the canon.

The same evil principle is always plaguing men as they attempt to frame for themselves a doctrine of God. Neither Unitarian nor Trinitarian has altogether escaped it. The former is very likely to find himself a Deist with a God who is a mere *deus ex machina* — a device to account for things; or else a Pantheist, whose God is a pervasive and impersonal Presence not to be very carefully distinguished from the World, or, if distinguished, only as the personification of rather mawkish sentiment. In neither case is there likely to be much spiritual comfort or much incitement to worship in such belief. The Trinitarian, on

the other hand, especially if he pride himself upon his orthodoxy, is in great danger of regarding his Trinitarian formula as an attempt at definition — a course which lands him almost inevitably in Tritheism. Every reference to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost which he makes seems like an attempt to emphasize his belief in their separateness; and it is with all the pride of "credo quia impossibile" that he admits how oppugnant his faith is to reason. It is only fair to state, however, that he represents but a small fraction of the great body of Trinitarians. It is what Bushnell used to call the "mere logicker," the man, that is, who would confine his definition of the human reason to the faculty of ratiocination, who in his fear of the Scylla of Unitarianism throws himself a willing victim into the Charybdis of Tritheism.

The instinct of the plain man whose faith grows up out of his experience, as that experience in turn springs out of the experience of the Christian Church, keeps him from any attempt to use the Trinitarian formula as a definition. It appeals to him as an attempt to express the Christian world's experience of the infinite wealth of Being in God. If

pressed to define his position further, he will very likely say that his theory of it can be stated only in terms of the doctrine of a modal Trinity; that is, he sees God as manifesting Himself to men in three aspects or modes of revelation.

He may be told that this Sabellianism of his is shallow and meagre; and the authority of great names from the third century to the nineteenth can be adduced to give weight to the charge. If the Trinitarian thus accused be a humble man, he will very likely plead guilty and admit that he has no thought of compassing all the truth in his partial attempt to give a reason for his faith; but rather of indicating the direction in which the larger truth lies as it is divined by his vision of the lesser truth revealed. Yet he will be an exceptionally thoughtful and gracious man if he take this position. He is far more likely to find himself puzzled and distraught by the seeming antinomy between the wealth of spiritual experience that has always accompanied the acceptance of the truth which the Trinitarian formula struggles to express, and the difficulty of the formula itself. He feels the need of some underlying interpretative

principle which current theology quite fails to supply.

This need is perhaps nowhere more definitely emphasized than when the man of whom we have been speaking attempts to formulate his doctrine of the Kingdom of God. He sees before him the Christian Church as a visible institution; or, as he may think himself forced to admit, he sees a multitude of churches bearing the Christian name, and almost all presenting many of the notes of a true Church. Yet the note of catholicity seems wanting — most sadly wanting, he sometimes thinks, in those very bodies where its possession is most stoutly affirmed. But (for we suppose him to be a man of generous temper) he may still discern some adumbration of the City of God in the *omnium gatherum* of all these sects. The mass seems so heterogeneous as to defy the skill and patience even of the Divine Head of the Church Himself. Yet on a closer view it appears rather to be unorganized than disorganized. Many of the distinctions which separate the churches represent not only no fundamental differences, but no appreciable differences. Though now and then these distinctions are

all the more pitiable and lamentable on that account, as in the case of two struggling Presbyterian sects in a small New England village, which were divided, according to waggish report, by the fact that one sang the Psalms of David, while the other used David's Psalms, yet it remains to be said that in a great number of cases these distinctions are simply the notes of natural distribution rather than of unnatural division. It is not to be expected and probably not to be desired that uniformity of Christian purpose should result in conformity of Christian method. Not all Christian worshipers are likely to agree upon a universal liturgy, from the very fact that not all men are so constituted as to be genuinely edified by the same modes of worship. The appeal of the spiritual is made to one man most naturally and effectively through the avenue of his intellectual processes; to his neighbor through his emotional nature. While each should yield mere preference in such a matter to the demands of the common good, he is under no obligation to incur permanent and utter sacrifice of this sort unless the common good demands it very clearly. Under normal conditions, these

two men may well work and worship in separate organizations, distinct rather than different, coöperating rather than conforming, members of one larger body rather than of rival bodies; but it is evident that if this is to be, it must come about through some common power dwelling in and animating both, and directing them as diverse agents in the performance of wisely distributed parts of one work. It is this Dynamic of Christian union and common endeavor that seems wanting to the vision of the average Christian man. He believes in it as existent, but as at present undiscerned or at least unrecognized. He looks to see it one day supply to the churches the notes of the Church.

The same problem in a somewhat subtler aspect confronts him when he pushes his inquiry into the relations of the Church and the world. Christ warned His disciples against worldliness in a way that clearly indicated His prophetic vision of a long-enduring antagonism between His Kingdom and the realm of the prince of this world. It has been a habit of religious teachers in all generations to assign to the latter realm everything that did not bear the direct impress of the Cross.

The dogma of total depravity gained such sway over the theologic mind at one stage of its development, that here again the clamor of the times thrust it into the XXXIX. Articles, where the *quam longissime* of Article IX. still abides to confute such as deny the Calvinistic element in that famous instrument. The theory that the earth is the Devil's and the fullness thereof has been tacitly accepted as a corollary of the proposition of total depravity. Now the doctrine of total depravity simply overstates a great truth. The pity is that good men should have given such emphasis to the overstatement as to invalidate the statement in a multitude of puzzled minds. The average man cannot reconcile himself to the belief that the material realm of nature in any real sense shared in man's fall; or that it is participant with him in God's displeasure at sin. Nor can he see how a generous deed can fail to meet God's approval, even in the case of a man who has not consciously and definitely heeded Christ's call into discipleship. His whole soul revolts at the old blasphemy which made even the honest prayers of the "unregenerate" to be sin unto them.

Yet all Christian experience goes to show that regeneration is a real episode in human life — a fundamental episode in Christian life, indeed. It is as unscientific to deny it or to treat it with indifference as it would be to deny or condemn the phenomena of physical generation. But does it not discount the reality of regeneration as a definite and conscious experience, to treat the "mere moralities" of a self-respecting and respectable man as though they found acceptable place in God's thought about him? Are we not in danger of confounding fundamental distinctions when we speak of the goodness of the man who has had no experience which he recognizes as conversion? Do we not go further along the same downward road when we permit amusements which are not only capable of abuse, but are notoriously abused? Even granting that a right use of them may conceivably be not only innocent but advantageous, is not the safer way to consign them to the category of the world's employments, and so to the ban of God's displeasure? Thus, many good people of honest and unselfish conviction have held and still hold; and the "world," while vehemently opposing their

contention, has been uneasily conscious that there were elements of truth in it. Both the Christian and the worldling, however, have felt at times a certain tendency to self-contradiction in these theories of the spiritual life. The Christian has been troubled because his notion of the Kingdom of God did not prove more hospitable to some persons, acts, and principles of life which, while not confessedly Christian, still seemed to belong to the Christian order of things. The worldling has been dissatisfied because all his exceptions to the meagreness and inadequacy of the Christian view of life, though some of these exceptions seem very well taken, prove utterly unable to overthrow the worth of the Christian principle, or to gainsay its persistent and authoritative demand upon him for a yielding of his personal allegiance to it.

The wonder will creep in whether there be not some power less exclusive in its choice of agencies, less mechanical in its methods of working, more pervasive in its influence and vastly more far-reaching in its results, than the Church has supposed the personal influence of Jesus Christ to be. The Christian is sometimes forced to ask himself whether the

whole Gospel has yet been proclaimed or not; and whether there be not a Divine Dynamic at work outside the hearts of men who have definitely accepted Christ, and beyond the pale of the visible Church, which we must recognize and worship before we attain to our real heritage of revelation.

Before closing this chapter, some reference should be made to the testimony which recent fiction and poetry bear to the place that theological topics hold in modern thought, and to the general incoherence of that thought itself. Whether a theological novel can *per se* be a good novel or not, it is beside my present purpose to discuss. Mrs. Humphry Ward has shown us that it may be an interesting, almost a fascinating novel, even though, as in "Robert Elsmere," the form of fiction be made to cover a considerable number of controversial sins. For in the Squire's library, access to which led ultimately to the overthrow of Robert Elsmere's faith, certain theological treatises were supposed to exist whose claims were so incontrovertible that this not very profound scholar found his own positions no longer tenable. It is not for the present writer to contend

that such treatises may not find justifiable existence upon the book-shelves of Mrs. Ward's creative imagination; but he would fain inquire after a clearer glimpse of their contents before believing that a man of somewhat tougher intellectual fibre than the late Mr. Elsmere could not have maintained his ground against them. Indeed, a fairly good case could be made out to show that in theological discussion such a use of fiction comes at times pretty close to what Newman called a "poisoning of the wells" in controversy; that is, the preferring such a charge against an opponent as the nature of the case prevents him from bringing to the test of evidence. Be that as it may, however, the volume in question stands as a type of a vast number of works of fiction setting forth one phase or another of some question that in its implications, at least, is theological.

No one can rise from the reading of such a powerful and gloomy book as the late Victor Rydberg's "Last Athenian" without a new sense of the force of St. Paul's words, "having no hope and without God in the world." Thomas Hardy has almost ceased to be a novelist, so completely has he given him-

self in his later and more painful books to the preacher's office. The closing paragraphs of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" and "Jude the Obscure" might properly enough have found place in the sermon which James Thomson put into the mouth of the High Priest of Melancholia, preaching in the cathedral of "The City of Dreadful Night."

> "I find no hint throughout the universe
> Of good or ill, of blessings or of curse;
> I find alone Necessity supreme;
> With infinite mystery, abysmal, dark,
> Unlighted ever by the faintest spark
> For us, the flitting shadows of a dream."

One cannot but wonder why a maker of men compact of bone and sinew, like the Mayor of Casterbridge, should be content to throw away his work, and turn to the fabrication of such flabby creatures as poor Jude. There was something not unworthy of Greek tragedy in the way in which Mr. Hardy's earlier and more masterful heroes were finally overmatched by Fate. But the later ones offer no real resistance to Fate because they are creatures of such loose fibre that Passion drives them whithersoever it will; and the man who is already the sport of Passion is scarce worthy to be counted an antagonist

by Fate. Mr. Hardy's God (if he have any) would appear to be one who, sitting in the heavens, doth laugh and have men in derision. In his later novels his foregone and profoundly unsatisfactory conclusion seems to be, "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken any way you please, is bad." From Mr. Eden Philpotts, upon whose sturdier shoulders Mr. Hardy's mantle seems like to fall, the problem of life in its ethical and spiritual phases obtains a much saner and more reasonable statement. Perhaps the apparent contradiction between the theology of mere sentiment, so prevalent to-day, and the theology of mere logic, so prevalent day before yesterday, has never been put more trenchantly than old Uncle Chirgwin put it to Joan after her betrayal by her artist-lover.

"'T is like this: your man did take plain Nature for God, an' he did talk fulishness 'bout finding Him in the scent o' flowers, the hum o' bees, an' sich like. Mayhap Nature 's a gude working God for a selfish man, but he edn' wan for a maid, as you knows by now. Then your faither — his God do sit everlastingly alongside hell-mouth an' laugh an' girn to see all the world a walkin' in same as the

beasts walked in the Ark. Theer 's another picksher of a God for 'e; but mark this, gal, they be lying prophets — lying prophets both! You 've tried the wan and found it left your heart hollow like, and you 've tried t' other an' found that left it no better filled; now try Christ, will 'e? Just try. Doan't keep Him as is allus busy, a waitin' your whims no more. Try Christ, Joan dearie, an' you 'll feel what you 've never felt yet. I know, as put my 'and in His when 't was as young as yourn. An' He holds it yet now 't is shriveled an' crooked wi' rheumatics. He holds it. Iss, He do." [1]

It is a picturesque setting forth of the inexpugnable hope of the human heart of a time when mercy and truth shall meet together; when righteousness and peace shall kiss each other. It is at the same time an indictment of the partial nature of every theology which emphasizes mercy as though it stood in no vital relation to truth; or righteousness as though it could be righteous and not issue in peace. A very good case might thus be made out for the permanence of theology's interest for men, from an ex-

[1] *Lying Prophets*, bk. ii. c. xi.

amination of the novels of the last five and twenty years. Should the inquiry be prosecuted into the realm of poetry, the argument would become *a fortiori*. Nowhere is the dictum of Horace Bushnell, "low grades of being want low objects; but the want of man is God," better illustrated. While at the same time abundant proof is given of the lack of coherence with which the want is expressed.

Tennyson's somewhat hackneyed and not very satisfying "infant crying in the night . . . and with no language but a cry," still wails on in many different keys, but with no least diminution of breath. It was almost funny to hear so grave and respectable an historian as the late Mr. Lecky sighing in rather labored verse, —

> "How hard to die, how blessed to be dead,"

especially in view of the fact that he gave us no least reason to suppose that it *is* blessed to be dead. Mr. Swinburne has got beyond all this, and proclaims

> "We have drunken of Lethe at last, we have eaten of Lotus;
> What hurts it us here that sorrows are born and die?

We have said to the dream that caressed and the dread
that smote us,
Good-night and good-bye."

Yet it does hurt, in spite of Mr. Swinburne's eloquent disclaimer, as witness Mr. G. A. Greene: —

"They have taken away my Lord;
They have shattered the one great Hope,
They have left us alone to cope
With our terrible selves:
The Strength of immortal love;
The Comfort of millions that weep;
Prayer and the Cross we adored —
All is lost! there is no one above;
We are left like the beasts that creep —
They have taken away my Lord."

Mr. Austin Dobson's "Prayer of the Swine to Circe" illustrates — all the better, perhaps, because he does not proclaim his graceful verse to be an illustration — what Dr. van Dyke has termed the "cureless melancholy of disillusion."

"If swine we be — if we indeed be swine,
Daughter of Persé, make us swine indeed,
Well pleased on litter-straw to lie supine,
Well pleased on mast and acorn-shales to feed,
Stirred by all instincts of the bestial breed;
But O Unmerciful! O Pitiless!
Leave us not thus with sick men's hearts to bleed! —
To waste long days in yearning, dumb distress
And memory of things gone, and utter hopelessness."

It is this prayer which Mr. Henley set himself to answer in his perverse Rondeau beginning, —

> "Let us be drunk, and for a while forget,
> Forget, and ceasing even from regret,
> Live without reason and in spite of rhyme."

But it will not do. The apparently diverse testimony of the poets of the major and the minor key alike tends toward one conclusion. They echo the unforgettable words of St. Augustine, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee." In the wilderness of modern verse which implies this we come now and then upon an almost startlingly explicit statement of it; as, for instance, in Francis Thompson's lines: —

> "I fled Him down the nights and down the days;
> I fled Him down the arches of the years;
> I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
> Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears
> I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
> Up vistaed hopes I sped;
> And shot precipitated
> Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,
> From those strong feet that followed, followed after,
> But with unhurrying chase,
> And unperturbèd pace,
> Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
> They beat — and a Voice beat
> More instant than the Feet —
> 'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.'"

In somewhat more conventional terms one of the most eminent disciples of Darwin concludes a sonnet written when he saw no hope that any true and genuine faith would ever come back to him : —

> " I ask not for thy Love; nor e'en so much
> As for a hope on Thy dear breast to lie ;
> But be Thou still my Shepherd — still with such
> Compassion as may melt to such a cry ;
> That so I hear Thy feet, and feel Thy touch,
> And dimly see Thy face ere yet I die."

Any study of the poetry of our time lends new strength to the conviction that the great poet is always a man of faith. It may not be perfectly coherent faith, exactly ordered and arranged in easily distinguished categories. But it is a faith wherein some vital principle resides. The poet looks out upon a world and in upon a heart where confusion is evident enough ; but it is the confusion of abundant material awaiting the builder, not the confusion of the wasted city ready for the sower of salt. The poet who would sing for some later age as well as for his own must tell of the realms of experience yet awaiting human exploration, and supply some guidance to the explorer. A map, the latter does not ask for. What he does ask, and has a right to expect

to find, is some truth which shall enable him to keep his bearings, and always orientate himself correctly.

One great poet of to-day in attempting to judge the World-maker by the world has asked: —

> "Is there strength there? — enough: intelligence?
> Ample: but goodness in a like degree?
> Not to the human eye in the present state,
> An isocele deficient in the base."[1]

Browning's questions are not to be answered lightly for the reason that they are soberly, bravely, and expectantly asked. But the line along which the answer is to be discovered is suggested by Tennyson's exhortation: —

> "Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
> And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!
> She reels not in the storm of warring words,
> She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No.'
> She sees the Best that glimmers thro' the Worst,
> She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,
> She spies the Summer thro' the winter bud,
> She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
> She hears the lark within the songless egg,
> She finds the fountain where they wailed, Mirage!"

Note. For a fuller discussion of this theme the author ventures to refer to his essay on "The Religious Significance of Recent English Verse," in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April, 1898.

[1] Browning, *The Ring and the Book — The Pope.*

IV

THE RELIGION OF THE PEOPLE

In the last chapter we discussed the confusion which has attended the attempt among the masses of men to interpret the universe through the idea of God. To speak more exactly, it has been an attempt to give meaning and congruity to life in face of the problems which experience forces upon it — for the abstract notion of the universe rarely oppresses or particularly concerns the average man. We turn now to a consideration of the uncertainty which hampers multitudes in their endeavor to regulate conduct through this same idea. Here we enter the realm of religion as distinguished from theology. It is useless to claim that the question is remote and out of relation to life's practical concerns. In a real sense it is life's most practical concern. Whether Matthew Arnold's contention that conduct comprises three fourths of life — one of those unsupported claims which

add a pseudo-scientific authority to the genuine literary charm of his writing — be defensible or not, it remains true that nothing can concern life more intimately than the ideas which regulate conduct, and give to it direction, tone, and purpose. This regulation is religion's office. It was never more clearly recognized to be religion's office than to-day. One of the secrets of the fretfulness or sadness which characterizes so much of the fiction and poetry of the last century lies in a discernment of the confusion into which religious thought has fallen.

Men are everywhere talking about the age of doubt in religion, and trying to make out that it is bringing in an age of carelessness in conduct. They do not have to go far afield for examples which seem to illustrate their claim. Whether it be possible to substantiate their claim or not is altogether another question; for the doubt, sometimes regretful and sometimes truculent, which has unquestionably characterized the religious thought of recent years is susceptible of two widely different interpretations. Doubt may be regarded as a sign of an approaching divorce between conduct and the religious idea, or as a sign of a new

realization of the need of natural relations between the two. The history of religion lends countenance to this latter view; for religion has developed in proportion as it has felt the necessity of this relation. It has become more spiritual, and so more deeply influential, as it has sought persistently for a rational faith, and insisted at the same time upon faith's vital inter-relations with conduct. This endeavor has always been hampered, to be sure, by the ineradicable tendency of conduct to become formal, building a roof of observance over its own head, as it were, and dwelling beneath it, out of reach of faith's vitalizing influences. When conduct has thus degenerated into observance, it ceases to be conduct in the deeper and more vital sense; for conduct is naturally plastic in the hands of will; observance is obdurate. The absolute refusal to be content with life's offering of observance upon the altar of faith, when faith asked for its conduct, has ever been the note of the prophet; while the tendency toward such content has in all ages been the great temptation of the priest. Judaism and Christianity have proved no exception to the rule that all religion tends to harden into for-

mality on the one hand, or to etherealize into mysticism on the other. Each has, however, produced a school of prophets who refused to let Jew or Christian rest in either form or dream. The most clairvoyant among the disciples of both dispensations have insisted upon this vital relation of faith to conduct. They were not satisfied that faith should issue in regulative rules or maxims, and that these should govern conduct. It was needful that life in its daily acts and relations should be inspired and illumined by faith.

So Isaiah, with his "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord," was bent upon making and keeping religion real. He sought to bring the reality of sin into saving touch with the reality of grace, and to order conduct in the light of the resultant experience. The tragedy of Hosea's shattered family life was but a picture of God's patient love of Israel, upon which Israel poured the despite of unfaithful conduct. The burden of the anonymous Malachi was that men should believe in God enough to pay Him formal reverence, and yet despise Him so much as to permit the form to degenerate into a practical mockery. This prophetic influence,

which never was altogether lacking in Israel, kept the spark of genuine faith aglow, despite all that formalism could do to smother it. There was enough good spiritual soil in Judaism to make it possible for the mustard seed of a new religion to take root and grow.

Nevertheless, the great enemy with which the new truth was forced to struggle was still the old tendency to regard religion as a matter of observance rather than as a source of life and a regulator of conduct. The religious men who surrounded Jesus were thrown into confusion — honest confusion, no doubt, in many cases — by the extraordinary interpretations whereby He seemed to transform the old Law. Their religious life had been a thing which submitted itself to metes, bounds, and well-defined ordinances. His did not. The Sabbath of the Scribes, with its limitations and prohibitions, was a matter that could be defined. His Sabbath, made for the use of man, and upon which it was lawful to do good, seemed vague, indefinable, and liable to revolutionary abuse. Their Law, with its eye for an eye, and its fine-wrought distinctions concerning murder, adultery, and the

honor due to parents, though it might be intricate, at least aimed to be exact. His Law of Love, with its emphasis upon the attitude of the heart toward God and fellow man, threw Pharisaic exactness to the winds. It was doubtless criticised upon the ground that it was antinomian and liable to miserable misuse in the sphere of conduct. In point of fact it was adapted and destined to regulate conduct as no rule of observance could do.

But the world has been slow to perceive this. The early Church almost split upon some of the questions which grew out of it. The New Testament word for religion was *θρησκεία*, and its primary significance had to do with external observance and worship. St. James uses it with a fine insight into the change wrought by the Gospel, making it perfectly plain to his readers that it can never become a Christian word except as its spiritual content be discerned, and religion, ceasing to be a thing of rules, maxims, and observances, become the inspirer and regulator of conduct through the heart.[1] The tides of religious life that have ebbed and flowed through the his-

[1] See Fairbairn, *Christ in the Centuries*, pp. 171, 172, for a discussion of *θρησκεία*.

tory of the Church serve to illustrate and substantiate this claim. The great reformers have been the men who touched the springs of faith rather than those who laid down rules of conduct. Regulation has always proved untrustworthy when imposed from without. It has been vital and therefore genuinely effective only when it has resulted from inspiration within. The preaching that has seemed to be primarily ethical has often proved less effectively ethical than the preaching that has been primarily spiritual. Indeed, a case might be made out for the claim that merely doctrinal preaching has proved as ethically effective as any that directed attention immediately to conduct. The great preachers of the English Church in the eighteenth century were admirable expounders of the worth of well-doing. The famous Deist, who confessed that he sent his servants to church that they might learn not to cut his throat, was not without some insight into human nature and the influence of ethical teaching on it. Yet, after all is said, the real hope for better life lay quite as much in the field-preaching of the Methodists as in the excellent dullness of the pulpit homilies. The Evangelical

movement was largely instrumental in a reformation of conduct because it made sin and need felt. The contemporary ethical preaching was directed toward making virtue seem desirable to men who were already very well content with themselves. The Evangelicals made men profoundly discontented with themselves; and it is a commonplace of experience that the "must" of a conscious need is always more fertile in expedients and more persistently powerful as a motive than the "may" of mere comfortable opportunity.

The last five and twenty years of the nineteenth century witnessed a considerable revival of ethical teaching and preaching. This was needed and proved helpful. But those who thought they saw in it the ultimate form which religion was to assume are likely to find themselves mistaken. The Church is still something more than a philanthropic club, and the art of the preacher will not always be content to give first place to the well-wrought homily. The frequent resort to the homily on the part of preachers and a certain demand for it on the part of the people are quite as significant of a general religious fogginess as of an awakening to the

need of better morals. The dissertation upon conduct is always the easy thing. It makes but moderate demands upon either preacher or congregation. It seems to comport well with the decencies of worship and religious observance. It rarely arouses feeling to an undue pitch; it is never accompanied by hysteria; and it issues in something immediate — something that the eye can see and the hand handle. There is less sowing of winter wheat, which must lie dormant for a season and pass through strange transformation on its way to fruition, than in the older preaching; and it is the thing which can still be done while both preacher and hearer, writer and reader, are in grave doubt as to whether there be any sound foundation of spiritual principle under their feet or not. This sort of preaching has its gastronomic counterpart in those predigested or partly cooked foods whose virtues every newspaper exploits, quite unconscious that it arraigns at the same time the common incapacity of our kitchens and our stomachs. It is of course a fortunate thing that men persist in good conduct even when in serious doubt as to the doctrine which underlies it. This persistence, however, is not

likely to be indefinitely prolonged. The conduct degenerates rapidly into mere observance, unless the doctrine be articulate and comprehensible.

One need not have a very wide acquaintance, or be gifted with unusual powers of observation, to discover that this is just the case into which much of the doctrine that men have been in the habit of regarding as most vitally related to conduct has fallen. The number of those who categorically deny the doctrines known as Christian is small. But those who question their validity, cavil at their basis in fact, and wonder at their authority in the realm of action, are a multitude; whether they are increasing or not, it is beside our present purpose to inquire.

Our purpose leads us rather to note some of the sources of this confusion. It is safe to leave out of account the factitious doubt which is but an expression of the unruliness of human passion and its restiveness under all restraint of principle. The most evidently valid principle of conduct will find occasional contemners so long as there remains in man a remnant of that childish unreason which leads us to cry out upon what arraigns us at

the bar of our unwilling judgment. There is a demoniac element in us all which would raise its strident "What have we to do with thee?" against the presence of transcendent worth, were it not muzzled by saner powers. With this we are not dealing; but rather with those questionings, sometimes welcomed by human frailty and sometimes contended with as the heralds of despair, which lead men to doubt the validity of Christianity as a Way of Life.

In point of fact, such questionings were to be expected with the decline of the principle of authority. The genius of Western Christendom for centuries occupied itself with system-building. It built a Church after the model of the Roman Empire, and constructed a system of religious doctrine as elaborate and well defined as its system of ecclesiastical government. In both these hemispheres of its life "authority" was a great word; sometimes all the greater because, like the sacred Name of Hebrew Scripture, it was rarely uttered. No man objected to authority. The *ipse dixit* of the Council or the Bishop in matters ecclesiastic was recognized to be the normal as well as ultimate

solution of all vexatious questions. The same general method obtained with reference to questions in philosophy or natural science. A great name was the most telling argument that could be adduced to substantiate a position. This reverence for authority grew old slowly. Its strength, even when threatened by age, enjoyed more than one period of recrudescence. The New Learning did not immediately undermine it, but merely supplied new intellectual pursuits for those whose restless minds might have threatened the principle of authority. The discovery of America invalidated the authority of old geographers; but it also opened new fields of material and spiritual adventure. Even the Protestant Reformation was less a rebellion against the principle of authority than an effectual protest against a particular source of authority. It was a revolution which succeeded in dividing the existing system, rather than in overthrowing it. Two systems resulted. The Pope and the ecclesiasticism which he represented remained at the head of one. In the other, the allegiance which had been the Pope's was transferred to the Book. The notion of authority vested in an earthly fountain-head

and exercised under a well-defined system was still regnant. It would be unjust to deny the deep insight of the great reformers and their perception of the power of a Divine Spirit ever interpreting the truth to men in terms of experience. Their visions of this truth were, however, as fleeting as they were inspiring, and the great body of their disciples settled back into dependence upon an earthly authority, which they connected with a heavenly source by a doctrine of inspiration made to order. There was, to be sure, a right of private judgment, but it was little more than a right of interpretation. Its metes and bounds were definite and often narrow.

To say all this is in no sense to belittle the Reformation's place in the intellectual and spiritual history of Christendom. It was an enormous step in the direction of freedom. The forces resident in it were destined to lead the world farther than the Reformers dreamed, though it took generations for the real implications of the principles which they established to appear. Indeed, they are but dimly discerned yet by the masses of men. Protestants have indignantly repelled the accusation of Catholics that the wild out-

breaks of fanaticism on the part of certain of the earlier Anabaptists and Quakers were legitimate fruits of the Reformation. Yet this assertion has enough truth to entitle it to respectful consideration. The real condemnation which it carries, however, belongs to the Catholic in quite as large measure as it can to the Protestant régime. Such fanaticism was the reaction of untrained and sternly repressed minds, after sudden release. It represented a license that was one day to become liberty, and a despite of supreme authority that through alternate experiences of rebellion and servitude must one day find the golden mean of friendship. During the last century we have seen this change passing upon the notion of authority in every department of thought. The principles underlying the art of education have experienced radical transformation. Authorities have arisen and fallen until, at the new century's beginning, all authority has seemed to be at discount, and pedagogy has become the toy of an empirical psychology.

Ever since the French Revolution, the source of authority in government has been the plaything of demagogues and the puzzle of philoso-

phers. The anarchist has categorically denied its existence outside the impulse of his own breast. The rare and occasional confessed aristocrat has as categorically asserted authority's derivation from some family or little group of families in each state, whose ancestors won their right to its exercise on the field or in the cabinet. The majority of men have been content meanwhile simply to doubt the principle of authority in government, recognizing any *de facto* master who might have wisdom enough to use his power endurably. In the realm of natural science it has been the student's boast that the day of the greatest man's ascendency is briefer than ever before. The newspapers and popular lecturers still remind us from time to time of the professor who told his assistant to remove from the library shelves every volume dealing with his special branch of science which was more than ten years old, and to consign it to the oblivion of the cellar; inasmuch as nothing of a decade's standing was worth reading by a progressive man. The tendency of the last two generations has been to arraign systems, to discount authority, to hold tradition in worst possible repute, and to exalt the

empiric and the opportunist. Let it be distinctly understood that I am not decrying or bemoaning this tendency. It is a fact of experience to be recognized and assigned to its place in the history of human progress. I incline to emphasize it here, because it suggests the further fact that the doubt which these generations have cast upon systems of Christian thought, and the uncertainty with which they have regarded the relation of Christianity to the conduct of life, have their counterparts in other spheres of human experience.

When we come to inquire into the more immediate causes of this doubt, they prove to be so numerous and so closely intermingled as to make specification difficult. It is scarcely to be questioned, however, that the growth of a scientific Biblical criticism has been a potent factor in developing present conditions. It was a shock to the popular estimate of the Bible to treat the Scriptures as a literature instead of a sacrosanct volume. Men now living no doubt remember the start of half-pained surprise with which the orthodox world greeted Stanley's reference to Abraham as a "sheik." To apply the terms of

common Eastern life to him seemed like a belittling of his divine vocation. But the world was to see greater things than these. It was to see a searching inquiry instituted into the extent and the worth of the Christian tradition which hedged the sacred documents of the new dispensation almost as closely as the traditions of the Jewish fathers had ever hedged the Law. Under such inquisition it was to see considerable portions of this tradition break down. It was called upon to formulate a new doctrine of Sacred Scripture. This, to the man who had been used to treat his Bible as an arsenal of proof texts, was hard and painful work. He was generally inclined to exaggerate the negative implications of the demand, and, perhaps, to refuse to honor it because it seemed to be so largely negative. Nor should we forget how vehemently the non-Christian, to whose unbelief the traditional view of the Bible was a rebuke and an offense, seconded the protest of his ultra-orthodox brother. Both argued from the premiss that if the tradition went, all must go. Either the Bible must be sacrosanct, or it must be profane. The man who touched the Isaiah authorship touched the foundations

of belief; and if a flesh-and-blood prophet were not swallowed by a literal fish, then must our faith be vain.

It is idle to argue that this premiss is absurd. That may be, but it is to be remembered that where feeling is involved, an absurd premiss will often serve the purposes of a very telling argument. An absurd premiss has once and again proved to be a stick abundantly good enough to beat a so-called "higher critic" with. A little time is needed for the absurdity of premisses to make itself evident to the man of the street. Meanwhile the beating may go merrily on, with his approval rather than otherwise, since it promises to silence a discordant voice and cast out a fermenting leaven. Yet the voice persists. The leaven works. The man of the street perceives at last that what he beholds is something more than a squabble. It is revolution; and his imagination, true to its nature, proceeds to an exaggerated estimate of the probable consequences. He forgets that as revolution never changes the genius of a people, so attack upon the forms of religious conviction never eradicates the conviction itself. Doubt and consequent

confusion may be introduced for a time. The validity of great principles may temporarily be called in question; but the principles themselves will persist in spite of all attacks upon the forms in which they are commonly expressed.

Another fruitful source of confusion to the religious thought of multitudes of people has been the attempt to popularize the study of comparative religion. It may be said that the study of so abstruse a science can never be popularized; and in a sense this is true. But it is also true that the results of this study are sure to filter down into the literature and thought of the unlearned, either in the form of rash hypothesis or of well-substantiated conclusion. In whichever form they come, they are likely to bring temporary confusion with them. The average Christian thinks of his religion as he thinks of his Bible, as original in an exclusive sense. The discovery of a parallel to any feature of either tends at first to diminish its authority in his eyes. The fact that Christianity comprehends the theanthropic elements which characterize the Aryan religions with the theocratic elements which mark the Semitic religions is more

than a beautiful coincidence. It is significant of Christianity's divine commission according to the law of an endless life; it prefigures its universal fitness to the needs of men. This significance does not, however, lie upon the surface. The first thought of the man to whom this message of the scholar is new may very well be that Christianity must be less of a divine revelation than he has supposed, since suggestions and premonitions of its great doctrines have come to men of other and prior faiths. It is disagreeable news to him that there should be an Assyrian tradition of creation and of deluge with which every fair-minded scholar must consent to compare Genesis. The thought of ethnic trinities comes perilously close to blasphemy. The more devout he is, the more he feels the obligation to explain away all adumbrations of the great truth of incarnation previous to its exemplification in Christ, and the less is his willingness to admit that any word to which Christ gave universal significance and currency had ever found previous utterance on the lips of some outstanding man reared in an ethnic faith.

Yet how if he be forced finally to admit

these things? Then will come the pains which accompany growth into a larger conception of the nature of Christianity and the method of revelation. Often enough this growth will at first seem hostile to development. The man's grip upon his faith as a guide in matters of conduct will frequently suffer in some degree during the process. Under the strabismic influence of it, he may conceivably join the short-sighted crew who are ever arguing that if Christianity be not absolutely unique, it cannot be authoritative; that if it prove to have some things in common with the ethnic religions, then it can be no better than they; and that there is every reason for supposing that each race's faith is the one best fitted to its need. The *non sequitur* of such reasoning is egregious enough; but it suits the purposes of some who would diminish the troublesome claims of Christianity upon their personal allegiance; of others who desire for any reason whatsoever to antagonize modern scholarship; nor is the fallacy always discerned by the honest souls to whom the faith of the fathers is ineffably dear, who at the same time see that the discoveries of modern scholarship cannot be

ignored, and who are heart-sick at the apparent antinomy between the new science and the old system. It is hard for them to perceive how a truth imperfectly apprehended by man's reason can be the truth; or how error can under any condition find place in the process of a divine revelation. They are impatient of the method of growth and disdainful of God's habit of using imperfect instruments.

If space sufficed, it might be shown how closely related all this doubt is to a dubious apprehension of the fact of personality — a tendency to discount the worth of the person, and to resort to mechanical contrivance for explanation of physical, mental, and moral phenomena. It is a mistake to assume that this lack of faith in the person is a result of so-called scientific "materialism." Personality is always at discount when men pin their faith to a system, whether the system bear the name of Calvin, or Comte, or Spencer. During the last fifty years it has been revealed to philosophers that their systems were partial. Some of the more discerning among them have perceived that their systems, from the very nature of the case, must continue to be

partial. The essence of life and the springs of power are not in them. The former is too subtle, the latter too ebullient, to be confined in any cage of mere dialectic. With this conviction has naturally come a feeling of uncertainty and doubt, since serious men do not transfer their allegiance easily. This doubt has been most painful when it has hampered religious faith and teaching. It has seemed to be most hostile to life when it has threatened to divorce religion and morals. But gradually we have been coming to see that if allegiance must be withdrawn from systems, it is only that it may be transferred to that which gave the systems all the life they ever had and all the promise of continuance they could ever boast. The new object is a Power. I say "Power" rather than "Person," not because the latter designation is excluded, but because it represents the goal which spiritual experience attains as a reward of service. One may, without fear of contradiction, affirm that every man in the sphere of conduct has experience of the Dynamic of Christianity; though of course it would be absurd to claim that he always connects the source of his experience with a system of Christian thought

or belief. Indeed, he may never realize in this present life the personal attributes of the Power which touches and influences him. The realization of this is for him the fulfillment of the Beatific Vision.

V

THE SOCIAL UNREST

The student of the history of Christendom finds few sadder chapters than those which tell the story of the struggle of the poor for an amelioration of their lot. There is a pathos quite free from any taint of sentimentality about their short and simple annals. The very brevity and simplicity with which history ushers in and dismisses the incidents of a peasant uprising bespeak the dumbness of the multitude whose desperation inaugurated it and whose hopes were built upon it. In A. D. 287 the Bagauds — peasants of Gaul — managed by some herculean effort after organization to besiege Autun for seven months and finally to sack it. The Emperor Maximian succeeded at last in breaking the power of the insurrection; but it was long before the old quiet of despairing poverty was restored; and the misery of the Gallic *coloni* and *dedititii* which caused the outbreak is dumb to this day so far as any really articulate utterance of itself goes.

The Jacquerie of 1358, if not as silent, is still as incoherent. It has had, to be sure, a so-called chronicler in Froissart. But Froissart is in the highest degree uncritical. By his lack of sympathy with the people, as well as by his ignorance, he was unfitted to tell the story of their hopeless fight for betterment of hard conditions; and since what the world thinks that it knows is founded largely upon Froissart, the commonly received history belongs to the vast category of "knowledge which is not so." The true story is sorry enough. The outbreak took place on the 21st of May, and was over by the 9th of June. Vengeance began at once, and continued through August. The whole affair was as bad and brutal as such outbreaks always are, but the letters of amnesty of the Regent of France issued on the 10th of August have been preserved, and show pretty conclusively the scope and range which Froissart gave to a naturally active imagination.

So we have but the scantiest chronicle of Wat Tyler's insurrection in 1381 and Jack Cade's — which seems to have been mainly political rather than economic and religious — in 1450.

There are few chapters in the history of the

period immediately preceding the Reformation in Germany which the student of the life of the people would give more to hear authoritatively and minutely told than that which should set forth the story of the Bundschuh Insurrection. It broke out in 1492, bearing upon its banner the "Bundschuh" or peasant's clog. The world-old panacea for such outbreaks — the sword — was tried upon it, and it seemed to yield to treatment; though the cobbler's banner was not taken. This had strange adventures on its journeyings through the Black Forest in Joss Fritz's bosom until it could be upreared again in 1514. Yet history is almost silent concerning all that the banner stood for. The hopes and fears which it symbolized must be relegated to the limbo of unwritten epics. The sober historian has little hope of ever making them authoritatively articulate.

The uprising of the Kurucks or Crusaders of Hungary in 1513 falls into the same category. We find the cause, or perhaps better, the excuse, of their organization in the advent of Cardinal Bacracz from Rome armed with a Papal Bull against infidels. There is a glimpse of the Transylvanian leader Dosza, under whom

the peasants armed and attacked the nobles. We know that he was captured and put to death with torture; but that is nearly all we know. The causes of the desperate unrest, as they arose out of the suffering of the poor, whose spirit was oppressed but not yet broken, can be but dimly discerned. There was no chronicler to tell the story from the peasant standpoint.

The great revolt of the next decade is better understood. It was in one sense a recrudescence of the old agitation for a better standard of life that at the close of the preceding century had rallied the Dutch poor about banners bearing the single word "bread" or "cheese." In another, it was doubtless due to the new spirit of independence fostered by the Reformation. With some plausibility Erasmus wrote to Luther, "You are now reaping what you have sown." Yet upon the whole, the movement was political and social rather than religious. It met the fate of its predecessors. The people had not yet found a voice, and the sword has ever been the great argument wherewith to meet the truth spoken by an unready tongue. Luther tells us that in Franconia, 11,000 peasants were slain; in

Würtemberg, 6000; in Swabia, 10,000; while in Alsace, the Duke of Lorraine was said to have brought up the count to 20,000.[1] The comparative silence of history is an enforced one here, since dead men tell no tales. There was no social science in those days, inasmuch as he who stated and tried to demonstrate even a simple social theorem rarely lived to write his *quod est demonstrandum.*

But with the French Revolution the army of the poor found a voice. Indeed, it may well be questioned whether the most notable result of that great social upheaval were not this fact, that the man who thought himself hardly used by society need never more be either dumb or inarticulate. As respects effusion of blood, the Terror sinks into insignificance beside the Peasants' Revolt of 1524, which cost twenty times as many lives. The one hundred thousand, however, were mostly dumb, while the five thousand whom the tumbril carried to the guillotine could speak or had articulate friends, and those who sent them there could reply. The incidents of the Revolution are of vast interest and moment in themselves considered, but the enormous vol-

[1] Cf. F. Seebohm, *The Era of the Protestant Revolution.*

ume of the literature which relates and discusses them has a deeper cause; for, as the Reformation marked the close of the day when Authority could dictate what a man might think, so the Revolution closed the day when Authority could bid a man be dumb concerning what he thought. Since that time men have spoken out what they were wont to whisper in secret. Great store of nonsense has been talked in consequence, of course; but it has also followed that the world has grown more rapidly acquainted with the circumstances and the problems of its own life in the last hundred years than in the whole of the eighteen centuries precedent to them. Especially have the poor found voice. Even the "submerged tenth," though little given to literary or oratorical effort in its own behalf, has always, ere it went down, found some bystander to listen to its cry and report its plight.

Hence has arisen the so-called Social Problem. There is nothing new about it. Every seer in every age has discerned its existence. Moses voiced it to Pharaoh. Amos, groaning in spirit over the land hunger of his day, when the "poor were bought for silver and

the needy for a pair of shoes," taught his generation that its only safety lay in recognizing and solving it. Jesus intimated its abiding character in his assurance that the poor were ever with us; for while there is no element of real foretelling in this saying, it is significant of a universal human experience. Langland in his "Piers Ploughman" has acquainted us with the misery of the English peasant class in the fourteenth century; and the contrast between his own gaunt discontent and the sleek complacency of Chaucer is a comment upon the social problems of their time quite as enlightening and suggestive as anything which either poet set down in black and white.[1] Yet these are mere occasional utterances of some outstanding prophet. They scarce represent the word of the poor man himself. That must still be inferred.

With the approach of the Revolution period, however, some of the elemental factors of the problem began to appear more clearly. Arthur Young's "Journeys in France," published in 1793–94, and Sir Frederick Eden's "State of the Poor," in 1797, gave pretty accurate and clear-eyed glimpses of real conditions. At the

[1] Cf. Green's *Short History of English People*, c. v. sec. v.

same time, through a multitude of new avenues, the voice of the poor began to reach the ears of the world. Kant's famous waking from his "dogmatic slumber" was no more real than the change that passed over the masses of those who had been hitherto subject to authority, and who were wont to regard their social status as fixed and permanent. The unnatural ebullience of revolution was bound to subside; but as when a tidal wave wrecks a port, other and lesser waves were equally bound to recur. Equilibrium is as slow of reëstablishment in society as in water. The minor revolutions of 1830 and 1848 on the Continent, and the great constitutional changes — revolutionary in fact rather than name — of Parliamentary Reform and the abolition of the Corn Laws in England, as well as the vast increase of America in wealth, power, and ability to provide opportunity for the poor man, have all had their influence upon social conditions. Each has been a factor in the restatement of the problem.

It is worthy of note that with this new freedom of utterance which has come to the poor man, and with the increased attention which the world has been willing to accord

to his words, a change has crept over his own definition of his needs. Any one who reads the story of the organization of labor may well be struck with the fact that while the aims of the thoughtful wage-earner during the first half of the nineteenth century were largely political, they have become, or are rapidly becoming, economic. The fight for political rights has been won. The recognition of the poor man as a man, with all a freeman's rights, has been accorded. Now he is turning his attention to the organization of society, and inquiring after the new economic privileges, to the winning of which his political privileges may minister.[1]

Hence the present unrest. It seems to be more pervasive and more generally recognized than ever. The literature to which it gives rise covers our reading-tables. It is one of the stock topics of discussion in debating club, trades-union meeting, church convention, and newspaper editorial. It forms one of the most trusted weapons of the Opposition in politics. Upon the strength of it the reformer

[1] Cf. Fairbairn, *Religion in History and Modern Life; Influence of the Intellectual Movement;* Mrs. Bernard Bosanquet, *The Standard of Life;* Webb, *History of Trades Unionism.*

fulminates his philippics against the present order and his prophecies of judgment to come. The religious sectary appeals to it as a sure sign of the approaching end of the present dispensation. The economic sectary calls upon a trembling public to observe that the times present numerous conditions which duplicate those that ushered in the Reformation of the sixteenth century and the French Revolution of the eighteenth. Precisely as the medical quack makes gain of a nervous public by calling upon them through the advertising columns of the newspapers to note every irregularity of function, and to see in it symptoms of grave physical disorder, so a multitude of political and economic quacks parade their nostrums before a society that is ill at ease with itself, not very wise and judicial in diagnosing its own ailments, and a good deal disposed to try experiments upon its uneasy body.

Yet while every one talks about this problem none appears to define it, for the excellent reason that it proves itself to be essentially indefinable. It transcends all our efforts to gather its known factors into a soluble equation from which we may hope to derive its

unknown. This may seem to be a rather fatuous and disappointing conclusion at which to arrive. It is not really so; because this conclusion is only a crude statement of the fact that the experience of society is an experience incident to its organic character. Society is an organism instead of a machine. It is a growing instead of a completed structure; moreover, its growth is not the mechanical growth of a building whose walls are rising by virtue of what men bring to it from without, but it is the outworking of an immanent or resident Force, feeding upon such material as it can reach and assimilate. Hence the problem of society is as complex as the problem of life itself. This problem will never be solved in the sense that all its component questions will be answered, simply because each new generation's experience will present new questions. The hope for society as for the individual lies in the discovery of a way of life, and in the development of a Power that shall guide and keep it in this way. A great deal that is said about the ailments of society is as amiable and well meant as the prayers of Kim's good Lama. It proceeds upon the hypothesis that society is bound to the Wheel of Things, and

that its only hope lies in Nirvana. That is the note of a decadent social faith. The man of robuster and more wholesome fibre will maintain that for society as for his individual life the Wheel of Things may be expected to lead to some goal worth attainment, if only the right path and an adequate force be at hand. There may be more or less jolting on the road, to be sure, but that is incident to all journeying.

It is therefore a very refreshing sanity that Professor Peabody brings to the discussion of the "Social Question" when he admits that there is no social problem which can be differentiated from social problems.[1] Of social problems there is great store. Never before were so many people awake to their existence. Never before were so many people under deep conviction that something must be done to mend the social order. "The social questions occur simply because a very large number of people are trying in many different ways to do what is right." [2] This very anxiety to do right, however, sometimes blinds our judgment as to accomplished progress and existing con-

[1] *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 335.
[2] Id. p. 347.

ditions. The quack, to give a factitious importance to the need which his nostrum is to meet, proclaims that things were never so bad before; that the gulf separating social classes was never so deep and wide; that the rich are growing richer while the poor are daily sinking deeper into poverty's Slough of Despond; and that, if any one pretends to care for the poor man's soul, it is only that he may more conveniently exploit his body.

To all this there is a plain historical answer to be made. It may not be true that social unrest to-day is less than it was at the beginning of last century; of this I shall speak a little later. But it is undeniably true that last century ministered to the poor man's chance in the world more purposefully and generously than any of its predecessors.

In the first place, the century was marked by the awakening of the conscience of Christendom to social conditions and needs. Lord Shaftesbury, whose theological and political Toryism was noted in the Introduction, admirably exemplified this social renaissance. He said very little about a social problem; but he was keenly alive to social problems. It has grown to be the fashion to sneer at some of his

methods and at many of his notions. Yet the world could ill have spared him. He really accomplished much, and he exemplified more. In an eminent degree he stood for the new sensitiveness of the social conscience. In a less degree he illustrated its enlightenment. Conservative though he was in politics and theology, he could not rest in his conservatism while men suffered; neither could he rest in any mere attitude of protest. He originated or identified himself with many diverse schemes of benevolence. Some of them were wise and some were foolish; but there was usually oil enough in the lamps of the wise to make a very hopeful and enlightening glow after time and the hour had snuffed out the flickerings of the foolish. The secret of his success lay in the fact that he was always after something that should make the permanent lot of the man he helped more tolerable and his chance in life larger. With characteristic Tory obstinacy he wrought at one of the greatest tasks of the century — "a definition of man that should take in the downmost man." [1]

Toward a social life lived in the light of

[1] Nash, *Genesis of the Social Conscience* p. 263.

such a definition conscience is still forcing the world. It is beside the mark to object that the world moves with very unwilling feet toward this goal. Conscience is often obeyed so unwillingly that the restiveness almost obscures the fact of obedience. None the less, it is ever becoming a more persistent and dangerous enemy to inhuman and unsocial life. It was in response to the demands of conscience, for instance, that slavery was gradually abolished throughout Christendom, in spite of what seemed to be the assured impracticability of abolition when Granville Sharp began his agitation. So any one who will compare Eden's statistics of the income and expenditure of the average laborer's family in 1797 with those of the "Family Budgets" gathered and arranged by the Economic Club in 1896, must be convinced of a change for the better in the poor man's chance of livelihood.

It would be hard to parallel to-day the story of James Strudwick and his wife Anne. They lived together as man and wife for over fifty years. For more than sixty years Strudwick wrought upon one farm at a shilling a day, continuing his labor until within a week

of his death. They had seven children, at least six of whom they reared to become heads of families in their turn. Yet, in spite of many mouths and little means, they never received a farthing from the parish. We are not to suppose their lot to have been harder than that of a multitude of families in England, nor than that of some in America, for they possessed rather an unusual capital of character. Some of the miners of their day lived in practical serfhood, being transferable with the collieries or salt deposits in which they worked. There were then no legal safeguards thrown about child labor, and early in the century children were drafted from the workhouses and asylums of the great towns for a service in the mills of the north that was a virtual slavery. Indeed, it was not until 1819 that Sir Robert Peel succeeded in passing a bill which provided that no child under nine should be employed in a cotton factory, and no young person under sixteen be allowed to work more than twelve hours a day exclusive of meals.[1]

In the United States the unsuccessful at-

[1] Cf. Mrs. Bernard Bosanquet, *The Standard of Life*, especially the chapter, "A Hundred Years Ago."

tempt of artisans in 1791 to procure a shorter day — their daily work then extending often through thirteen hours — is significant, not only of their rightful discontent with the conditions under which they worked, but of the almost entire lack of sympathy on the part of the general public with their attempts at betterment. In 1825, again we find the ordinary wages of labor astonishingly low, while the attempts at organization were still treated by the public with indifference, or with the cruel prejudice which so often springs from an undefined fear.[1]

In the early winter of 1902, the writer had occasion to investigate the circumstances of a laborer's family in a New England town. Both man and wife were commonly regarded as of less than ordinary intellectual capacity; both were accounted to be victims of bad environment and worse heredity. Neither had

[1] For a more detailed discussion of some phases of this question see a series of articles by the Author, entitled "A Century's Influence: (1) Upon the Conscience of Christendom; (2) Upon the Poor Man's Chance of Livelihood; (3) Upon the Lot of the Dependent Classes; (4) Upon the Worth of Human Life; (5) Upon the Church's Sense of Responsibility;" published in *The Congregationalist and Christian World*, Boston, February–April, 1901.

seemed to profit much by such educational opportunities as had offered themselves. It would be unfair to class them as criminals, although it should be noted that the woman had been in jail for street-brawling. As compared with the Strudwicks, whose case is cited by Sir Frederick Eden, they were distinctly ill provided with the capital of character. Yet on inquiry of the man's superintendent, it was found that he had regular employment and was counted a dependable workman. As the superintendent spoke, he turned to a pile of time-cards near by and looked up the amount of wages for November and December — the two months immediately preceding the investigation. The record showed $62 earned in November and $64 in December, and it was stated that these months were in no way exceptional. It appeared further that the woman added to the family resources by going out more or less to service. After making every allowance for the fact that the autumn of 1901 was a time of abundant work and good wages — as well as of high prices for all articles of household consumption — no fair-minded man can resist the force of the contrast between this family's lot and that of the Strudwicks.

There was probably no opportunity in the world at the close of the eighteenth century for a man of this laborer's capacity and skill to make a living that would at all correspond with the return that his ordinary expenditure of labor brought him in the first year of the twentieth century.

If, turning from the case of the poor man's chance of livelihood, we direct our attention to the lot of the dependent classes — the insane, the criminal, and those whose poverty compels them to rely in some degree upon corporate relief — we find a contrast between the beginning and end of the nineteenth century that is quite as notable. The famous articles on Insanity and Mad-houses in the "Edinburgh" and "Quarterly" Reviews of 1815, the former written by Sydney Smith, vividly portray the entire lack of system in some asylums and the systematic brutality in others. It was not until 1839 that John Conolly came to Hanwell and banished the strait waistcoat, nor until the early '40's that the agitation which resulted in more humane and rational care of the insane began in New England. A writer in the "North American Review" of January, 1843, says that within three months he had

found one man near Boston confined in a cage about six feet square in a woodshed open to the public road. In the next town he found an unlighted shed, twelve by eight feet in size, connected with the almshouse, and in it a middle-aged man, nude and stark mad. At the same period the cage for the insane was no very extraordinary appurtenance to a New Hampshire farmhouse. In contrast with all this, there are few more striking sights in New England to-day than the great State Hospitals where the insane are treated, if need be at the public expense, with the best appliances that modern science has been able to suggest.

The trend of last century's endeavor to deal with crime and the criminal was in this same direction of a clearer recognition of his rights and needs as a man. Some foolish experiments were tried, some failures were made, and the problem as a whole was by no means solved. But no intelligent man doubts that the abolition of imprisonment for debt — in 1829 no less than three thousand persons are estimated to have been in confinement in Massachusetts alone for that cause — and the results of the work of reformers like Fowell Buxton, Alexander Maconochie, and Sir Walter Crof-

ton marked a distinct advance toward the answer of a most intricate and difficult question.

There has been similar progress in the estimate placed by society upon the worth of human life. When, in 1810, Sir Samuel Romilly introduced into Parliament a bill abolishing the death penalty for shop-lifting, he was opposed and his bill defeated on the ground that only two years before he had been instrumental in passing a bill abolishing the death penalty for picking pockets, and there was no telling where the thing might end. One young man said to him frankly, "I am against your bill; I am for hanging all." How well he expressed a common feeling in society is shown by the fact that when the nineteenth century came in, more than two hundred offenses were punishable with death in England.

It is often insinuated that the tendency of philosophy during the nineteenth century has been to lend us

> "Evil dreams;
> So careful of the type she seems,
> So careless of the single life."

Yet in point of fact, the individual life was never held to be so precious in society's eyes

before. This is due partly to a more sensitive humanitarianism, and a keener feeling that it is society's business to safeguard a man's right to himself. The general revision of penal codes, the elaborate regulation of traffic by sea and land, as evidenced by such legislation as that advocated by the late Samuel Plimsoll, the Red Cross movement originating in M. Dunant's experiences upon the field of Solferino, and the vast pains and expense to which the United States goes to maintain its elaborate and efficient Life Saving Service, all indicate a new susceptibility of society to the fate of the individual. Science and philosophy have done much, also, to emphasize society's solidarity. However distasteful Scripture may be to our ears, the last century's experience has forced us to believe as never before that we are members one of another. Tyranny in China or Turkey in some degree disturbs and oppresses Christendom. Unsanitary conditions in Cuban ports threaten the health and prosperity of the United States. Now and then signs appear that some glimmerings of the truth that no nation can live to itself commercially are penetrating the thick darkness of our legislative halls. The social

and religious missionary is more in evidence than ever before both at home and abroad — and the missionary, whether he represent a church, college, social settlement, or trades union, is always a sign of society's solidarity.

It would be, then, both dishonest and idle to deny the advance of the average individual during the last century. He has gained in material possessions, and in opportunity and range of life. If society's so-called problem could be expressed in terms of the standard of life of a century ago, there might be some hope of its solution. But the standard of life is an eternal variable. Man is the one unsatisfied creature, and the horizon of his ambition increases as the square of the radius of his opportunity. Instead of comparing his to-day with his yesterday, he is prone to measure it by yesterday's dream for to-day. As a contemporary poet puts it, he is like a man who, —

> "dwelling in some smoke-dimmed town
> In a brief pause in labour's sullen wheel, —
> 'Scaped from the street's dead dust and factory's frown, —
> In stainless daylight saw the pure seas roll,
> Saw mountains pillaring the pefect sky ;
> Then journeyed home, to carry in his soul
> The torment of the difference till he die."[1]

[1] W. Watson, quoted in *Spectator*, November 23, 1901, p. 800.

It is in this "torment of the difference" that the present social unrest largely lies. The hungry man is by no means the most restless man to-day. The agitator is not generally a man who is in dire and immediate need. He is the man who is very conscious of "the difference." This consciousness may simply rouse him to envy, malice, and all uncharitableness. It may appeal to his sense of justice. It may open his eyes to certain definite and practicable steps that can be taken toward the amelioration of present faulty conditions. In the first case he becomes a professional agitator, whose bitterness discounts his influence. In the second he may become one of those voices in the wilderness which haunt the souls of a generation of men — and which generally prove to be the forerunners of some gospel. In the third he makes a mark, and leaves a name as a practical reformer. He does not solve the Social Problem; but he rearranges its factors. He does not assuage the unrest; but he soothes the immediate pain; he satisfies the day's hunger.

The unrest abides. It signifies a certain inadequacy of human experience to meet the desire of the soul. It portends the certainty

of further change. It bespeaks the need of leadership. But more clearly than anything else, it proclaims the fact that society is not a machine, but an organism.[1] Its problems are the problems of life, not of mechanics. Its future depends not upon a formula, but upon an immanent force daily adapting environment to purpose — a force that shall prove its permanent adequacy to changed and changing conditions. The answer to society's ever recurring questions must be made not by the *ipse dixit* of authority, nor in terms of a philosophical, economic, or theological system, but in the words of a living and present Power.

[1] Cf. Herbert Spencer, *The Dynamic Element in Life*, a chapter added to the revised edition of the *Principles of Biology* in 1898 ; and Mr. A. S. Pringle-Pattison's comment upon it in the *Quarterly Review*, July, 1904, p. 263.

VI

THE THESIS

In the preceding chapters an endeavor has been made to state a condition. We have seen how slow the world has been to admit the possibility of growth in theology. Theologians of the ultra-conservative type, though insisting upon the scientific character of theology, have seemed to regard it as the immovable bed-rock upon which all scientific structure must be reared. Investigators might mine into it; they might quarry its material for various purposes of building; but the stuff itself was the deposit of an age of revelation long since closed. The contemners of theology — and they have been many during the last half century — have also denied the possibility of theological development because they have chosen to regard theology as moribund; as destined to pass away; as no longer worthy the attention of the man of genuinely scientific habit. Some of them have gone

farther, and maintained that religion was as moribund as theology; that it marked a mere passing phase in human development, and that the man of the present was outgrowing it as certainly as the man of a remote past outgrew the need and use of an arboreal habitat. The man of the present appears, however, to be impatient of this programme. Religion is not so easily sloughed off. If he rid himself of the faith that brings peace, he is very likely to find himself in the clutches of the superstition that brings fear.

Hence have followed the rather tantalizing popular conditions sketched in Chapters III. and IV. Men have found themselves unable to abandon theological investigation and religious observance without danger of surrendering their highest prerogatives. They have found themselves almost equally unable to coördinate their fragmentary but precious progress in these realms into a satisfying experience. Meanwhile their embarrassment has been accentuated by analogous conditions in society (Chapter V.), where undeniable political and material progress finds its footsteps dogged by persistent discontent.

Religious experience has continued in spite

of the fond unwisdom of the devout and the bitter contempt of the scornful. It has multiplied the material of theology. Theology, however, has been distrustful of her power to use the material. Some few theological masons were at hand; but no architect has appeared. Indeed, it is by no means certain that he is wanted, since the true architect is something of a prophet, and likely therefore to be a disturber of systems and a deviser of new types that sometimes refuse to harmonize with those to which we have become accustomed. A young clergyman spoke to me with enthusiasm some years ago of the church in which he had just begun to preach. "It was a gem of a church; the exact reproduction of ——," and he named a country church in another land and belonging to a long bygone century. All the archæologist and historian in his hearer went out to meet the young rector's enthusiasm, but the question would arise whether a church in which service to God and man was to be rendered to-day ought to be regarded quite so exclusively as an article of *vertu*. Its peculiar charm seemed to consist not in its adaptation to present need so much as in its suggestion of a former adaptation to

the need of another day. It is true that the need is eternal; but it is equally true that our attempts to meet it to-day, if they are to have any measure of success, must be more than copies.

The inadequacy of any formal system to withstand the encroachments of time is becoming ever more evident. We are reminded of it by the periodic embarrassment of institutions endowed and chartered to teach certain doctrines. The trustees of lecture foundations conditioned upon the promulgation of once well-established views, or even upon the treatment of specified themes, are sometimes driven to strange devices to obtain competent lecturers and at the same time escape misappropriation of funds. The eventual impotence of the dead hand has been among the hardest of lessons for the world to learn. Pretty distinct glimpses of it have reached the eyes of to-day, however. As a result, the attitude of the world is half fearful and half expectant. Men are conscious of transition. Some, as has been already intimated, look to see both theology and religion go by the board altogether. Others look for the advent of a new system-builder — some

philosophical or theological architect, who shall devise a more lasting structure than those which time and the hour have undermined. The question which it is the purpose of this chapter to raise is whether the day of the system, philosophical or theological, as a completed structure has not gone forever, and whether we are not in a position to welcome something better and more vital as its substitute.

In the realm of physical science no one would dare any longer to proclaim himself the professor of a system which should attempt to compass the sum total of knowledge in such fashion as to preclude investigation in any direction or the influx of new light at any point. We have passed from a mechanical into a vital method in our "secular" learning. To effect such a transition in theology would once have seemed like a going over to the side of the agnostic. Yet the transition has been made by a multitude of thoughtful men, for all that. They have seen that the agnostic had something to teach them. He has generally been bumptious, often ill-bred, and still more often perhaps dishonest, in so far as he rejoiced to misrepresent his opponent's views. He has

frequently been dogmatic in his agnosticism, and so denied himself. Nevertheless, he has brought his message to the world. It was very largely a message of protest, and therefore partial and temporary, but it needed to be proclaimed. With it he was forever cudgeling dogma; and dogma undoubtedly deserved cudgeling. The agnostic's mistake has generally lain in the fact that the play of his cudgel has been directed to compassing dogma's death instead of her humiliation. The sources of her life were beyond his reach. The trappings of her pride were not, and she was bound to prove a more effective handmaid to the truth for having them stripped off; since the dogma, which when enthroned has so often proved to be a tyrant over the household of faith, is nothing after all but the hypothesis, which, sitting in the place of a servant, has shown herself eminently fitted to the household's needs.

The ground of science is not merely the principle of the Continuity of Nature. It consists rather in an *idea of nature* itself. It is a faith, which experience seems to fit, that nature is self-consistent; and that the Dynamic of Nature — the Force which mani-

fests itself in all nature's processes — is rational, and so far forth personal. In the light of this faith the investigator proceeds with observation and experiment. He states and tests his hypothesis in perfect assurance that the processes of nature will verify and indorse *some* hypothesis — either this or one toward which the mistakes in this will direct him. He is by no means disheartened because he finds *post hoc* sometimes masquerading in the garb of *propter hoc*. The fact that the disguise so often succeeds for a time is but an indirect testimony to the faith men have and ought to have in a rationally ordered universe. They are so sure that adequate cause exists for every event that it is small wonder that they should be sometimes led astray by the sanguine and premature cry, "Lo, here!" or "Lo, there!" This faith, even when building upon an inadequate hypothesis, is never an object of contempt to the really scientific man. It is always more rational than the attitude of the unbeliever in nature's steadfastness and continuity of process.

The result of the great scientific renaissance since Bacon's day has therefore been

twofold. The inductive method substantiated man's faith in the rational character of the Power which underlies and expresses itself in the course of nature. It has, on the other hand, warned us against too implicit faith in any so-called system which claims to sum up and comprehend nature. The arc of adequate scientific investigation is not the arc of a circle whose circumference we can describe and whose content we can measure. It is rather the arc of a parabola, whose law we may define, but whose extent is beyond us, and whose circuit is and must always remain open. Only at infinity is the axis of experience fully competent to determine the direction of the line of universal truth which there runs parallel to it.

So with theology and the scientific approach to it of recent years. The content of revelation is not complete. The system which describes and deals with it is and must remain partial. There must be room for growth, and glad expectation of it. The real things to be sought are as clear conceptions as possible of the source, the nature, and the working method of this principle of growth. The discovery of these things will

meet the desire of a day eager for a reconstruction of systems better than anything else can do. Such discovery will not always fulfill the day's immediate expectation; but it will do something better by demonstrating the fact that the expectation of a completed system which shall withstand the wear and tear of time is so meagre as to be unworthy. The thing which the world has a right to expect is the vision of a process and the introduction to a principle whose scope and power shall be limitless. This is not to deny the validity and use of systems. It is simply to impugn the perpetuity of any one system. A system of theology or philosophy is like a deciduous tree. It has its seasons of umbrageous growth, when it impresses every on-looker by its rich vitality. To this succeeds the period when the signs of growth disappear, and with the clearer definition of trunk, branch, and twig it takes on a look of wintry permanence. Another season of assimilation of new experience with its appeal to the imagination comes, to be followed by a second period of arrested development and exacter definition, until at last the great climacteric of life is reached and passed. The

system, like the tree, may yet endure for generations as a monument of vast interest and usefulness. Its great significance has now become historical. It belongs to the past rather than to the future. The violence of man or the slow process of decay finally overthrows it, and the places which knew it know it no more forever. As a systematic arrangement of material appealing to human attention and sympathy, the thing is done; but the vital principle which gave this arrangement a real though temporary validity is still extant, already arraying itself in new forms, and preparing to render a further service.

It is in such a sense as this that we must accept systems of theology or philosophy. Not one of them that ever succeeded in concentrating the serious attention of any considerable body of thoughtful men was probably wholly false. Not one, merely as a system, has ever shown itself to be completely and permanently valid. The time has come when we should recognize this fact with glad resignation. We shall not be the poorer for it, if it teach us that the secret of permanence in philosophy and theology alike lies in a principle, not in a system. As the secret of adap-

tation to a changing environment is the secret of the life of a man; or as the principle of civic continuance is to be found in the intelligent exercise of human liberty; so the secret of a rational theology and a practical religion lies in the possession of a principle of life, resident in the world and especially in man; rational in its ways and means of working; and purposeful, to this extent, at least, that its outlook is manifestly, even though sometimes mysteriously, upon the future.

Every candid and intelligent student of the history of religion and of physical science must be struck, I think, with the aversion which men have shown to a belief in non-resident causes. Their theory of life and change has always tended to ground itself upon a resident principle. There is profound significance in the readiness of primitive peoples to believe in spirit-possession. Even the superstition that leads such numbers in the present day to have recourse to the wizard and clairvoyant, or to sit in gaping wonder while a so-called medium summons the spirits of the great departed to write bad poetry upon dirty slates, or return silly answers to fatuous questions, is not without its meaning. It all goes

to show how ineradicable is the tendency of the human mind to find the invisible and indefinable Cause of things near at hand instead of far away. Man is naturally a believer in resident causes, and, at the same time, he is a believer in a transcendent Cause. The apparent antinomy may plague him, but it persists. The "Big Man" about whom the Fuegians spoke to the inquirers of H. M. S. Beagle, the "Baiame" or "Mysterious Chief" of the Australians,[1] as well as the "Great Spirit" of the North American Indians, are all exceedingly anthropomorphic; but they are also transcendent. Their deity removes them from immediate and tangible contact with men, but not altogether from some mysterious and immediate connection with the causes of events. Their sons, or agents, or the spirits hostile to them and with which they are at war, are resident on earth, and through their intervention good or ill comes to pass.[2] The Chinese warping a house-boat through the primitive lock on one of his canals divides his working forces into two companies. One hauls the

[1] Cf. Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Australia*, chapter xviii.

[2] "Anthropology — A Science?" *Quarterly Review*, January, 1902.

boat, the other beats tom-toms to fend off the activity of the malignant spirits resident in the neighborhood, whose presence would invite disaster. The Indian is keen to make distinction between his good and bad medicine. The negro, and not infrequently the white man, cherishes his rabbit-foot. The intelligent, and very likely pious, inhabitant of civilized communities likes better to see the new moon over the right than the left shoulder. He laughs at what he probably considers the fossil footprint of an extinct superstition. Yet he bears witness, in company with his sign-fearing and magic-practicing brother, to the tendency which all men feel to account for events upon the ground of resident causes.

At the other end of the scale, the philosopher works out his theory of development. Whether he believe in a transcendent First Cause or not, he founds his theory immediately upon immanent or resident causes. He is doubtless following a strictly scientific method. Yet the impulse behind the method is the same that actuated the African in developing his theory of magic; or the mythologist in ascribing a personal resident to each constellation, grove, and mountain; or

the Lystran leaders, crying in view of an unexplained and startling event, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men."

When philosophy undertakes to organize and correlate the diverse experience of men, the relation between the magic-monger and the scientist appears. The fact has to be recognized that the human mind can reason only upon the basis of immanent and resident causes. It also becomes evident that the developed human mind demands the unification of these causes and their assignment to a common source. Whether we call that source "God," or the "Father of the Gods," or a "Big Man," or a "Cosmic Force," the significant inclination to use the capital initial recurs. The intelligent demand for a recognition of this Ultimate Cause, immanent in all subordinate causes and resident in all events, will eventually prove, I believe, to be irresistible.

The comparatively recent doctrine of development known as Evolution has not only emphasized the necessity and suggested the method of unifying our knowledge in the realm of physical science, but it has also gone on to demand a similar unification of both

theory and experience in sociology, psychology, ethics, and religion. One of its most important services has been rendered by its claim that no realm of human thought is foreign to its principle, and that its method will upon investigation prove to be universal. In view of the fact that Evolution won its spurs and demonstrated its power in the domain of physical science, it was scarcely to be wondered at that ethics and theology should have looked askance at it and been slow to acknowledge its validity for them. They might readily have been more hospitable to it, however, had their ears been attentive to the teaching of their own prophets, for Kant, Goethe, and Tennyson had all more or less explicitly forecast its coming. As has happened before in great crises of history, however, the foretold and hoped-for event, when it came, made its advent in so unexpected a quarter, and voiced its truth in such startling and unwelcome words, that those who should have been most ready to welcome it proved to be its bitterest opponents. The "Origin of Species" seemed to contradict all current notions of creation, and the "Descent of Man" threatened to rob humanity, not merely

of the doctrine of Divine Sonship, but even of the poor distinction of total depravity. Man was to be no longer great even as a sinner, but must be regarded simply as the last of the beasts that perish. This was the fear that men had of Evolution, with its demand for the reorganization of every realm of knowledge in accordance with its new principle; and the claim of some of the earlier evolutionists, who were scarcely more clairvoyant than their opponents, went far to justify the fear. They appeared to imply, even if they did not explicitly claim, that the resident causes to which development was due were resident in events in such a sense that they might be considered to be independent of, and, possibly, even unrelated to, any Ultimate Cause or Reason. More than this, the great doctrine of Natural Selection and the Survival of the Fittest appeared to imply that all rational life must of necessity be selfish; and that success in the strife after food, shelter, and such training of faculty as might enable a man to distance his fellow at whatever cost to the latter was the true object of life's best ambition. They seemed to imply further that life was exclusively a thing of the present; that the past,

though the ladder by which man had climbed, might be safely kicked away when he had made good his foothold on the plane of to-day; and that the future (meaning by that word the period beyond immediate experience in this life) was to be disregarded entirely, except so far as the contemplation of it might serve to make him resourceful in delaying its advent to the latest possible moment.

In point of fact, however, during all this time Evolution was really elucidating two principles, which, could they have been foreseen, might very well have mitigated, if they did not end, this strife. The first of these was that the attitude of any creature toward the future is of vast moment in determining his hold upon the present and his rank in the scale of creation. In proportion as the parent gave of his vital force to the sustenance and the training of his offspring, the assurance grew that the race in which this group of parent and child was a social unit would make good its claim to continued existence. With the prolongation of infancy the creature rose in the scale of creation. With the appearance of man this prolongation of infancy appeared to reach its normal climax; but as man him-

self developed intellectually and ethically, it appeared that a yet further prolongation of infancy must be provided for. The child was now seen to be dependent upon the parent, not merely for sustenance and shelter during the period of youth's physical incompetence; he was further dependent for education and ethical nurture, in view not merely of the parent's personal experience, but of the recorded experience of the race. In a new sense, a regard for the future was forced upon every normal human life. It became evident to far-seeing men that life at its best involved an investment of the present in the future.

While this has scarcely come to be recognized as a formulative principle in the doctrine of Evolution, it can hardly be questioned that its recognition is only a matter of time. The moment this comes to pass, place will not only have been found, but necessity will have arisen, for the office of religion as voiced in the two great commandments of Christianity. How deep the significance of this evolutionary principle is for society, Mr. Kidd has lately suggested to us in a volume, the main contentions of which are likely to abide, however much we may deplore the author's lamentable

style, or take issue with many of his arguments.

The second principle elucidated, half in its own despite, by Evolution was that the process of development is not only orderly, it is purposeful. This is, of course, only to say that the order of events in the universe, as viewed from the standpoint of Evolution, seems to be susceptible of scientific treatment. The very phrases, "Natural Selection" and "Descent of Man," imply that the development process has a *rationale*. It is capable of apprehension by a thinking man. Its law can be at least approximately determined by observation, induction, and experiment. Now it is difficult to convince men for very long that a development which is so orderly as to make a direct appeal to the human mind, and which is so consistent in the great sweep of its onward march as to point to a generally continuous evolution of the higher from the lower, is not the product of a Reason whose methods it is within the power of human reason to follow with at least partial intelligence. The whole process is so responsive to thought; the events in it seem upon the whole to be so subordinate to the rule of the human intellect;

the regimen of reason seems to fit their case so well, that it is impossible to doubt their origin in reason. As I have before implied, the doctrine of Evolution has given back to us a teleology far richer than the somewhat mechanical "Theory of Final Causes" which it took away.

Here, then, the evolutionary hypothesis provides us with a principle that is essentially religious, for it is based upon the existence of a "Cosmic Force" or "Power," which so far as we can see is omnipresent. It is resident in events. It is immanent in all departments of life and experience. It is self-consistent in its working. It appears to be future-regarding and purposeful in a large and comprehensive sense. Its methods seem to be rational in that, as soon as discovered, they issue a direct and immediate challenge to the human intellect. All this is only to say that the principle whose working we term Evolution is a personal power. This has always been the claim of religion. It will become, I believe, no less really the assertion of science; for science with an ever increasing certainty proclaims the doctrine of one universal principle of being, life, and development. It is impatient

of any theory which would separate effect from cause, or remove the principle of life and development out of the universe in which the manifestations of its power appear; or make the processes of this power fundamentally irrational.

We turn to the Christian religion to inquire if there be any corresponding principle of power, immanent, resident, future-regarding, purposeful, and rational, working by means of imperfect instruments upon obdurate material for the attainment of large ends by means of a process of development. I believe that we find it in the often misunderstood and generally neglected Doctrine of the Spirit.

VII

THE WITNESS OF SCRIPTURE

An intelligent man who should come to the reading of the Gospels for the first time and without theological predisposition would doubtless be impressed with Christ's sense of the partial nature of His own work in the flesh. Early in the ministry He began to perceive and to teach that His bodily presence with the disciples was but an episode or incident in the work of redemption. He looked forward, and taught them to look forward, to a chapter of experience very different from that in which they then found themselves. The shepherd was to be taken and the sheep scattered. As a result of His ministry — a ministry that was directed to making life whole — division was to appear between the world and His disciples. It was to penetrate into families, to break up households, to visit hitherto relatively contented communities with utter unrest. Though a very Prince of Peace, He

saw with perfect certainty that His mission was to be like the coming of a sword and the kindling of a fire among the conventions in which men were making their homes. The Gospel was to prove a death-dealing as well as a life-giving message. Its principle was a principle of discord as truly as of order.

Or it was also an integral part of Christ's teaching that the death and the discord were to be capable of translation into terms of life and peace. It is instructive to note the pertinacity with which He clung to the things that live and grow in illustrating the coming of the Kingdom. The wheat sprouts secretly, unnoticed if not forgotten of the sower until the blade appears. The leaven is hid in the meal and works by a process which must have been completely mysterious then, although its method is partially discerned to-day. The mustard seed, least among its fellows, becomes greatest of herbs by the exercise of powers which in a sense are resident, although their source and method are alike beyond our ken. In each case the discord-element appears. The plow cleaves and overturns the sward in its preparation of the earth for the seed, as the hand of the bread-maker spreads commotion

and disarrangement through the mass of the meal that every part may be leavened.

The disciples were eager to interpret their Master's teachings into the vocabulary of the present or the near future. He was repeatedly obliged to tell them that this would not do. The vocabulary of the present was not rich enough to fit it for the task. Using that vocabulary, He was obliged to bury much teaching in it for the future to develop. Many of His parables were cryptic utterances, whose significance only became clear in the light of later experience. His very presence in the flesh was a hiding as well as a revealing of the truth; and it was one of the fundamental necessities of His mission that He should go away, and go by the door of supreme sacrifice. No life ever needed a right perspective so much, if it is to be understood. In a most eminent degree it was forward-looking and future-regarding. Christ never cut loose from what was vital in the past; He fulfilled the past. The present was intensely vivid to Him and He lived in it. Yet the key to both past and present was in the hands of the future.

Hence arose the expediency of His departure. "The veil of flesh hung dark" before

the eyes of those who must see clearly if they were ever to guide their fellows into a saving knowledge of the truth. The message embodied in Christ's life and death was so vital as to constitute a new epoch in divine revelation and in human experience; but it could only be understood, Christ told his friends, through the presence and interpretation of another παράκλητος, or Helper, whose advent should succeed His own departure. This Helper was to be Lord of the Future. The New Dispensation was to be His rather than that of the Man, Christ Jesus. He was to interpret the revelation of Christ and to apply it to life. He was to be the treasurer of truth, bringing out of His treasury the new and the old, showing those hitherto hidden interrelations between them which should give new significance to both. It should be His to guide men into all the truth. He should clear their eyes for the discernment of eternal distinctions, convict their hearts of sin and need, and win their lives into consonance with God's will. In Him the world was to know God forever as immanent and executive.

In another chapter I shall attempt to show how slow the Church has been to apprehend

this doctrine, to apply it to life, and to enjoy its freedom; as well as to indicate its wealth of significance for our present somewhat confused and troubled day. I pass on here, to indicate very briefly the anticipation of it that breathes through the Old Testament, and its further amplification in the teachings of the New.

It was long ago remarked by Professor Robertson Smith that the idea of the spiritual in the Hebrew Scriptures seemed to connect itself with the divine working rather than with the divine nature.[1]

The Hebrew word, *ruah*, means in the first place, breath of the atmosphere, or wind; second, the breath of man; third, the principle of vitality, as when the spirit of Jacob revived upon learning that Joseph lived; fourth, the life of feeling, as when Pharaoh's spirit was troubled at his inability to recall his dream; fifth, the spiritual element in human nature, as when Moses implores Jehovah, "the God of the spirits of all flesh," to appoint a leader for Israel; and sixth, the vital energy of the divine

[1] *Prophets of Israel*, p. 61, quoted by Professor Swete in *Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Holy Spirit." Those familiar with this most suggestive article will note the indebtedness of this section of the present chapter to it.

nature. This vital energy appears in the phenomena of human life. Elihu exhorts Job to hear him, because the Spirit of God had made him and the breath of the Almighty gave him life.[1] It shows itself also in keeping, renewing, and withdrawing life. If the Almighty should gather unto himself His Spirit and His breath, all flesh must perish together.[2] The man who possesses exceptional power as a leader is described as a man "in whom is the Spirit."[3] Even the craftsman's skill of Bezalel is referred to the special inspiration of Jehovah. He is represented as called by name, and "filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship."[4] So the Spirit of God might visit and make use of men of doubtful life like Baalam or Saul, but His abiding presence and power could only be the possession of the man of character.

The Prophet was the man upon whom in most eminent degree the Spirit of Jehovah rested. "The true prophet is one who is lifted up by the Spirit of God into communion with Him, so that he is enabled to interpret the

[1] Job xxxiii. 4. [2] Job xxxiv. 15.
[3] Numbers xxvii. 18. [4] Exodus xxxv. 30–33.

divine will and to act as a medium of communication between God and men." [1] It would perhaps be going too far to claim that in the Old Testament the work of the Spirit of Jehovah is made distinctively personal. There is an approach to a distinction of person in the rare contrast between Spirit and Word; but upon the whole the Spirit of God seems rather to be an expression for God immanent and executive in the affairs of the world. The thing that is really notable is the courage and consistency with which all energy is referred to a divine source. God is in the beginning. His Spirit broods and moves upon the face of the waters. He breathes into man the breath of life, and man in turn becomes a living soul, capable of initiative, but still dependent upon the divine sources of power. In the common exercise of ordinary human abilities the divine energy was so thinly veiled as to be discernible to the really clairvoyant eye; while in all genius or eminent talent it stood forth immediate and effulgent. "The Hebrew Scriptures — in contrast to the timidity of many of their apologists — emphasize the origin of human valour and

[1] *Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible*, ii. 403.

justice, skill, art, and wisdom, all common virtue and common knowledge — as by the inspiration of Almighty God. The earth is Jehovah's and the fullness thereof. The Spirit of man is the candle of Jehovah. By Him kings reign and princes decree justice." [1]

As time went on, the Palestinian Jews divided into sects and grew subservient to ceremonial law. Under this change the larger doctrine of the Spirit seems to have disappeared. The Palestinian books in the Apocrypha have but few references to the Spirit. This was natural in view of the increasing importance which the apocalyptic method was assuming, since the artificiality of the hidden and the occult is always at variance with the simplicity which characterizes the Old Testament idea of the Spirit. It was impossible for a simple faith in the divine immanence to coexist with the extraordinarily elaborate angelology and demonology which the school of the Pharisees early began to develop and teach.[2]

[1] G. A. Smith, *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*, pp. 111, 112.

[2] Cf. Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Appendix XIII., and also Porter, art. "Apocrypha," in *Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible.*

So much of the larger and more vital doctrine as survived, appears to have taken refuge among the semi-heretical Jews of Alexandria. The book of Wisdom reflects and expounds it. "For wisdom which is the worker of all things, taught me. . . . For wisdom is more moving than any motion: she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty. . . . For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness."[1] "For thine incorruptible Spirit is in all things."[2] The real universality of this doctrine, developing as it does the inchoate universality of the Old Testament references to the Spirit, and looking forward to the explicit teaching of the Gospel, is best brought out by Philo. As Professor Swete has put it, "The Spirit comes to all men, since even the worst of men have their moments of inspiration, their glimpses of better and higher things. . . . Of the ethical aspects of the Spirit's work in man, Philo has little to say, except that its func-

[1] Wisdom vii. 22–26. [2] Wisdom xii. 1.

tion is to promote clearness of mental vision and capacity for the intellectual knowledge of God, and that it fulfills this mission either by purifying and elevating, or as in the case of the prophet, by superseding the natural faculties." [1]

As we enter the realm of the New Testament, a change takes place in the terms used, and we find the hitherto rare expression τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον gaining a great preponderance. The Christian Church does not yet seem to realize the important place which the New Testament writers give to the work of the Spirit as related to that of Christ; or perhaps more exactly, the attempt to realize it has been mechanical and unnatural, as though both the Incarnation and the coming of the Holy Ghost were devices to which God had been obliged to resort, instead of great normal self-declarations of His nature. In the view of the New Testament teaching, "The coming of the Spirit corresponds to the coming of the Son, *mutatis mutandis*. . . . The Son came to unite Himself to human nature, the Spirit came to inhabit it. The Son came to tabernacle amongst men,

[1] *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Holy Spirit," B : II.

the Spirit to dwell in them. But with each coming a divine mission began which marks a new departure in God's dealings with mankind."

I have already referred to the words of Jesus in which He told those about Him of the necessity for His departure. One of the most conspicuous illustrations of the divine poise and balance with which He wrought appears in His patience with the obdurate material which He had to mould to His purposes. His work was one for the introduction of which it was needful that the divine should be translated not merely into terms of the human, but also, if we may so speak, into terms of the corporeal. The Logos could never become really articulate except by means of His body — a body to be worn with toil and to be laid aside with suffering. But it was equally true that the Word could never become completely articulate and intelligible while Jesus as a visible bodily presence strove to utter it to men who tended to interpret everything in terms of the temporal and earthy. They were not ready yet to grasp the great distinction between the personal and the corporeal. The presence of their Master as a human figure before their

eyes rendered it practically impossible that they should attain to this distinction. All that Christ could do, so to speak, was to perform the great deeds of objective ministry, and to tell the disciples that the significance of this ministry lay in the future. Yet in telling them this He implied that they would be quite as really under personal guidance then as now. "When He, the Spirit of Truth shall come, He shall lead you into all the truth."

It is worth while here to note the character of this influence and guidance. The verb is ὁδηγήσει — a compound of ὁδός, a *way*, and ἡγέομαι, *to lead* — and the meaning lies sufficiently plain upon its face. This leadership into the truth was to be a simple and natural thing. There was to be no miraculous overpowering of a man and dragging him perforce into the realm of truth; but the process begun by Jesus and limited in a sense by His corporeal presence was to go on. The obdurate and intractable material among the disciples would tend to remain obdurate and intractable; but by degrees it would be softened and moulded to higher ends, as the guidance of the Spirit of Truth continued. It is nowhere implied by Jesus that any sudden illapse of power was

to come upon His followers to clothe them or their successors with the divine attribute of omniscience, or to relieve them of the necessity of following step by step into those realms of truth which were the Spirit's home and their goal. There is here on the one hand no implication that the Spirit's guidance involved the infallibility of the disciple who was led, or on the other that the guidance of the Spirit was to be confined to the group who then listened to Jesus in that upper chamber, or to their immediate successors.

The significance of this verb ὁδηγήσει grows upon the reader as he ponders the phrase immediately following its object — εἰς τὴν ἀλήθειαν πᾶσαν, "into all the truth." There is, it should be remarked, an alternative reading here with the preposition ἐν followed by the dative; but the two readings almost imply each other. If we read the accusative with εἰς, then it is into the depths of the great realm of truth that the disciples are to be led; if the dative with ἐν, then the thought would seem to be of a leading to and fro through truth's green pastures and beside the waters of its comfort.

This was Christ's thesis as it is represented

in John xvi. 12, 13.[1] What follows was in the nature of an amplification of it. The Spirit of Truth was not to speak from Himself merely, as though His presence and work represented a breach in the continuity of God's self-revelation. There is no thought of a distinction in the Godhead so objective as to need for its emphasis the obscuration of its unity. The work of the Spirit was to be immediately related to the work of Christ the Saviour. The material of truth was, so to speak, furnished by Christ. The Spirit was to bring men to avail themselves of the material, to build with it, to work it over into such forms that life could be sheltered and nourished by it. The Spirit, too, was to reveal the architectonic plan for society as men were able to receive it. He would open their eyes to the real significance of their experience. He would flood the stagnant shallows of their lives with the full tides of His grace and power. He would lead them to a contemplation of divine mysteries, especially as revealed in Jesus; but He would never leave them to mere contemplation, even though they

[1] For the relation between the Johannine and the synoptic view, which must of course influence every student of these passages, cf. Wendt, *Teachings of Jesus*, ii. 252 sqq.

might plead like Peter on the Mount to be permitted to build tabernacles and remain. The Spirit's work does not end in passivity, be that passivity never so ecstatic, but in service.

The more deeply the student ponders the Johannine treatment of this great theme, the more he inclines toward the use of some tentative formula to express the Trinitarian suggestions of it. To avoid certain shipwreck upon the Scylla of definition and at the same time to steer clear of the Charybdis of utter vacuity and vagueness is no easy matter. It would seem, however, that the narrator of this discourse of Jesus was proceeding upon the hypothesis that in the Father, God *is;* in the Son, He *utters* himself, thus becoming articulate and intelligible to men; while in the person of the Spirit, He appears among men, not merely articulate now, but executive — working in, upon, and through them. It will be objected in some quarters that upon the forehead of such doctrine as this can be discerned the Hegelian brand. To which the grateful answer is to be made, that whatever suspicion may still attach to the great name of Hegel, it has, I believe, forever lost its damning power.

It will have been noticed that the passage upon which comment has just been made is not one of those containing the distinctive Johannine term for the Spirit — ὁ παράκλητος. This word appears four times in the Last Discourse and nowhere else except in the first Epistle of St. John, when it is applied to the glorified Christ exercising His mediatorial office; where it is translated "Advocate." The verb παρακαλέω means to call to one's side, to summon, especially for help, as an accused man may summon counsel for his defense at the bar. Hence παράκλητος means one who pleads another's cause — an advocate. Philo uses it in the sense of intercessor. It is this office that is designated by the references in all three of the Synoptic Gospels to the help which the Spirit might be trusted to render to disciples when they were brought before rulers and magistrates and knew not what to say; although the Johannine word is not used. When the translation "Comforter" is retained, it must be with the understanding that it is used in the older fashioned and general sense of "comfort," as in the law which defines treason as giving "aid and comfort" to the enemy. The King James translators of course

had this significance of "comfort" in their minds, and their use of "Comforter" meant not merely one who assuages grief and lightens sorrow, but one who stands ready to give aid and support all along the line of human need. It is to be noticed that in all the passages where ὁ παράκλητος appears, it evidently has a distinctly personal significance. He comes forth from the Godhead as a source. He is the Spirit of truth proceeding from the Father, and the scope of His activity is as wide as the realm of truth itself; but His immediate and special work appears to be the taking of the things of Christ and showing them to men. Commentators of the last generation used to ask whether this Helper might be expected to add to the revelation made in Christ. In the common acceptance of the question we must answer, Yes, since the influences of the Spirit are always revealing to men things that at first thought they refuse to connect with the teachings of Jesus. As the revelation proceeds, however, the principles that govern action under it find their source and their substantiation in His Gospel. Almost every Johannine reference to the work of the Spirit not only harmonizes with the theory of a progres-

sive revelation, but seems to demand it, if we are to reach any adequate comprehension of Christ's promise, or to enjoy the fruits of His mission in any other than a narrow and meagre way. The scope of the Spirit's work is far more comprehensive than the Christian Church has often been willing to recognize.[1]

One further fact brought out by a comparison of the other passages relating to the office of the Spirit with this which we are considering must not be passed unnoticed. It has to do with the method of the Spirit in accomplishing His purpose. That purpose is nothing less than the conquest of the world. The method is summed up in the one pregnant word ἐλέγχειν, to convince of wrong or error.[2] "And when He shall have come, He will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment."[3] The nouns stand in the Greek without the article, and hence are to be taken in their large and general significance. The

[1] Whether or not it be His office to teach the facts of history, I do not presume to say. But I wholly agree with Godet's claim that it is His office to reveal the meaning of the facts of history, which without the Spirit would be only a frigid narrative incapable of creating or sustaining life. Cf. Godet, *Gospel of John*, Am. trans., ii. 305.

[2] Cf. Godet, ii. 309. [3] John xvi. 8, Godet's trans.

world is to be won, not by compulsion put on outward freedom, but by the institution of deep heart-searchings. Every revelation of truth is to necessitate a breaking up and a remoulding of men's thought upon these great realities, with Christ's thought upon them as the norm toward which each reorganization is to effect a closer approach.

It is further to be noted that the instruments which the Spirit will use in applying this method to a scheme of world-conquest are men made in the image of God. "He shall show you the way," Jesus says in effect, "and you shall point it out to others. 'He shall take of mine and announce it unto you,' but only that you may in turn pass it on to those about you whose need to-day is what yours was yesterday." Not by the unutterable groanings of nature; not by cataclysmic force; but by wise, gracious, and loving influence of redeemed lives inspired by sanctifying power, shall the Spirit do His work; and the army of men thus redeemed, thus inspired, thus at work for the fulfillment of the Spirit's purpose, shall be the Church.

The candid reader of the Epistles can scarcely escape the conclusion that their au-

thors were conscious of a divine presence in the world ready to do for the individual believer and for the Church what Christ might have been expected to do could He have remained in bodily form with the disciples. Neither St. Paul nor St. John enters upon any elaborate attempt at definition. They were, generally speaking, writing letters instead of treatises upon systematic theology. Their theory of Christianity's dynamic is implicit rather than explicit; and any modern doctrine that should found itself upon nothing more coherent than scattered proof-texts clipped from their writings must remain more or less a thing of shreds and patches. Professor Sanday and Mr. Headlam have pointed out with great discrimination the fact that there is a difference in the doctrine of the two Apostles corresponding to a difference in their experiences. Out of the intimacy of his personal fellowship with Jesus, St. John thinks of the Spirit as "another Paracelete." St. Paul, who had enjoyed no such knowledge of his Master in the flesh, but who knew Him at first hand in the spirit, is wont to refer to the work of the Spirit as a continuation of the work of Christ without any break except the corporeal disap-

pearance of the worker, or any change except the change of growth and necessary adaptation to new environment.[1] The phenomenon of Pentecost is to be regarded not so much as the beginning of the Spirit's presence in the Church as the beginning of His recognized headship and authority.[2] Pentecost brought light and power. The light not only illumined the future, but interpreted the past. It should never be forgotten that our picture of the life of Jesus is not the picture that the Twelve saw in the days of their pilgrimage with Him, so much as it is the representation of His life and words as the Apostles saw them in the light of Pentecost's illumination. The significance of miracle, parable, personal rejection, and sacrifice all waited for the Spirit's revelation. Yet this revelation was intended to do more than confirm and guide the individual believer. From Pentecost the conviction arose and grew that the work of the Spirit had a corporate as well as an individual end. He was to be the inspirer and leader not merely of the disciples, but of the Church.

It is interesting to watch the growth of this

[1] Cf. Sanday-Headlam, *Romans*, pp. 200, 201.

[2] Cf. McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, pp. 49, 50.

conviction in the writings of St. Paul. In the earlier Epistles the presence of the Spirit is set forth as of eminent worth to the personal life of the believer, endowing it with gifts and graces and guiding it in the discernment between true and spurious charismata. In the middle section there is a far greater tendency to deal with the Spirit's nature and His fundamental relation to men. Here we discern Paul's growing consciousness that the Spirit is, and is to be, regnant in the whole dispensation, the first chapters of whose earthly history he and his fellow disciples were then making and recording. He is the great purveyor of grace to men. Wherever He walks the earth, faith, hope, and love spring up to mark His steps. He will take up His abode with men if they will have Him, and He will consecrate their very bodies to holy ends and uses. The man who walks in the Spirit shall show the fruits of the Spirit. These shall be of such a sort as to make him tolerant of his fellows and tolerable to them, thus introducing a heavenly comity into earthly social life. The Spirit dwelling in a man shall establish a certain identity between the human and the divine. The man thus inspired shall

understand as by instinct the things of God. He shall love his fellows and order his life according to a heavenly rule. Hence the poor and unlearned, when really imbued and inspired with the Holy Spirit, shall be able to perceive and effectively witness to matters which seem insoluble or absurd mysteries to the wise and great.[1]

It becomes evident, then, that the indwelling of the Spirit as viewed from the standpoint of the Epistles is eminently social in its results. This conviction seems to have possessed St. Paul in an increasing measure as time went on. It is deepest in the later Epistles. The Church is become more than a few groups of individuals of similar belief and experience. It is a new society establishing itself in the midst of an old and moribund civilization. Its destiny is nothing less than the ushering in of a new heaven and a new earth wherein righteousness shall dwell. The writer of 2 Peter looked for the dawn of this new day amid cosmic revolution and cataclysm. Paul looked for cosmic revolution too; but the real secret of the new society lay beyond

[1] 1 Cor. xi. Cf. Matheson, *Spiritual Development of St. Paul*, pp. 179 sqq.

all this. The ideal of the Church as a comprehensive and eternally vital organization seems to have been ever with him in the later days of his apostleship. The union of believers in the bonds of peace is to be the result of the Spirit's indwelling.[1] Individual grace has now a more distinct and definite corporate purpose than ever;[2] and significantly enough, it is in the light of this corporate purpose, this new social consciousness, that St. Paul writes of the graces of individual Christian character with the most eminent felicity, freshness, and power.[3]

We see, then, that the place accorded to a doctrine of the Spirit in both Old and New Testaments is at once larger and more vital than students of the Bible have commonly realized. "The Spirit" has always been an expression for some form of the divine immanence. The writer who used it has always represented God as immediately present in human life and the world of common affairs, imparting skill to the workman's fingers, wisdom to the statesman's judgment, or eloquence

[1] Ephesians iv. 3. [2] Ephesians iv. 7–12.

[3] Cf. *Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Holy Spirit," ii. 410.

and cogency to the prophet's plea. This normal self-revelation of God is overshadowed rather than interrupted by the special revelation through Jesus Christ, — but only momentarily, and as it were for the purpose of a better understanding of normal methods. So God is represented as speaking to Moses face to face upon the mountain, that Moses might have greater assurance and intelligence in interpreting the more commonplace relations of the camp and plain; and Jesus takes his chosen companions to a summit of transfiguration, that long afterward the Spirit's teaching about His life and death might have more significance and power. Pentecost marked the recurrence to an old and normal order of revelation quite as truly as the establishment of any new order. It did mark a new era, however, because from this time on some men were to see that God was in His world, — executive in it, — capable of immediate perception by every intelligent being, — capable, indeed, of something like assimilation by every spiritually clairvoyant soul. The Spirit in the world was to be the inspirer and director of every honest search after truth and every attempt to translate it

into goodness, in both individual and social life.

In the next chapter we shall inquire as to the measure of recognition which the Christian Church has seen fit to accord to this implicit revelation of Scripture.

VIII

THE WITNESS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

When, under the influence of the new science of Comparative Religion, what may be called the Natural History of Religion comes to be written, we may expect to find that all highly developed religions pass through a common struggle between institution and principle, body and soul, system and spirit. This is equally true of philosophies, which as soon as they are reduced to systems need to be improved upon, broken up, and revived. It is no less the experience of governments, which never find written constitutions permanently adequate to the reconciliation of their principles with their circumstances. The Parisian bookseller who answered the inquiry for a copy of the French Constitution with the statement that he did not keep periodical literature uttered words of truth and soberness. All written constitutions must be

instruments of periodic reissue or amendment, unless they are to become instruments of tyranny.

An instructive historical parallel might be drawn between the history of Christianity and the history of the Platonic philosophy in this respect. Both passed through a period when asceticism and enthusiasm threatened to become the dominant note of the Christian and the Platonist, though neither the founder of the religion nor the father of the philosophy was an ascetic or an enthusiast.[1] The Christian Church was scarcely chartered and established before it found itself involved in this inevitable struggle. The vital and fruitful period of the old dispensation had come to an end with the passing of the prophets. The critical question for Christianity was whether or not the prophetic spirit and office were to be revived and retained. St. Paul had recognized the prophet as worthy of all honor, and in the famous treatise upon spiritual gifts in his first letter to the Corinthians,

[1] Cf. the suggestive rather than authoritative essay on Plotinus in Vaughan's *Hours with the Mystics*, i. 83. Also the more systematic treatment of his relations both to Platonism and Christian Mysticism in Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, pp. 91–99.

had given him a place next to that of the Apostles. As the Church developed institutionally, the prophet remained the free man in it. His authority was immediate rather than derivative. In the *Didache* (10) the prophet is designated as the proper person to conduct public worship, and the only person who may offer thanksgiving in such words as seem to him to be fit, and without recourse to liturgical forms.[1] It was to be expected that this would open the way for occasional extravagance and error. St. Paul accordingly reminds the Corinthians in monitory phrase that God is the author of peace rather than of confusion, and that the true prophet is always master of such measure of the Spirit as is intrusted to him;[2] but he was too shrewd and wise not to see even in the occasional outbreaks of mantic frenzy the hypertrophy of a real power placed at the disposal of the Church.

The power was too immediate and genuinely vital, however, to admit of easy regulation. Hence, as the institutional growth of

[1] Cf. Gwatkin, art. "Prophet in the New Testament," in *Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible.*

[2] 1 Cor. xiv.

the Church advanced, the prophet became a thorn in the side of every organizer. The Church had a great work to do. Thorough organization, strict discipline, a clear recognition of the metes, bounds, and responsibilities of every office, seemed to be indispensable to its accomplishment. Thus in the realm of belief fixed creedal forms were of value, that it might be determined whether a man belonged to the household of faith or not. The Church saw its mission in the possible conquest of the world for Christ. It saw the model of organization in the Empire. It proceeded to gird itself for the struggle by all the methods known to wise and prudent men in whom the spirit of leadership was moving. The end determined the means. A vast institution, with its hierarchies, its creeds, its revelation contained in a sacred book, began to take definite and permanent form. It was admirably adapted to its work of conquest; admirably adapted to grow — but to grow as an institution by a process of half-mechanical accretion rather than to develop according to the law of an endless life. This development was not to be foregone; but it was to be accomplished with struggle and

difficult bursting of institutional bonds — the age-old conflict between the orthodox and the heretic.

A chief place among the protagonists in this great drama must be accorded to the Montanist. Fanatic though he was and narrow too, as most fanatics are, still his shrill voice testified to one truth that was vital and permanent. His programme was in many respects negative and hostile to true development; but there was one positive element in it which goes far to atone for all the negations. The Montanist steadfastly maintained that the circle of revelation was by no means complete; that the sum of revelation was not yet cast up; and that the avenues of revelation were not yet closed. God's Spirit yet strove with man; spoke to him immediately; guided his endeavor, if he were willing to be led; and made each year of the Church's life richer in knowledge than the last. It will be said in reply that the Montanist was an ascetic and an enthusiast; that he had grotesquely literal notions with reference to the "end of the age" and the approaching reappearance of the Lord; that he threw common sense to the winds in wooing martyrdom, and did despite

to Christian charity in his treatment of those who, under stress of persecution, had recanted. All this is true, and it is further to be alleged against him that even his exaltation of prophecy was vitiated by his reversal of St. Paul's dictum, and that he thought of the prophet as subject to the Spirit in a degree that practically suppressed his own personality.[1] Yet after all is said, the Montanist heretic bore manful testimony to the rights of the individual as opposed to the authority of the Church; and to the continuity of revelation as an experience of every man whose life is open to the Spirit's voice. The Montanist himself had his day, passed, and is remembered only as a name; but by way of Tertullian his influence told upon Christendom.

It is interesting to note that the man who gave to the Church the formula of apostolic succession should himself have laid stress upon an apologetic method which could afford to leave it entirely out of account. But when at his best, — for no man was ever subject to greater vicissitude of spiritual experience, — the impetuous Carthaginian defended more significant things than apostolic succession.

[1] Cf. Allen, *Christian Institutions*, pp. 99–105.

Unlike the earlier Montanists, he accepted the Church's organization. He was, however, in no way reconciled to the claim of the organized and visible Church to an exclusive revelation. There was danger lest the Church should accept the doctrine that Heaven, open once for the impartation of truth, was closed again; and that truth itself was a deposit to be kept intact and pure. Against such belittling — for belittling it would eventually prove to be — of the Church, the Bible, and the Christian experience, Tertullian strove. Nor did he strive altogether in vain. The Church reckoned with him, and with the Montanists through him, as she often reckons with those whom she condemns. While repudiating the heretic, she not infrequently accepts the gist of his heresy, translated into her own terms. Thus, ever since the day of Gnostic and Montanist, the possibility of continued and immediate revelation of the truth to men by the Spirit through a multitude of varied avenues has been implicit in the Church's doctrine. The periods in which it has been recognized and acted upon have been times of unrest, doubt, struggle, bitterness, but none the less times of growth. As Professor Allen has recently and eloquently

put it, "The obscure prophet of Phrygia[1] had raised the eternal question of the ages. On the one hand, administration and order, the well-being of the Church in its collective capacity, the sacred book, the oral voice of the Master, the touch of the vanished hand, the perpetuation as of a bodily presence, some physical chain, as it were, which should bind the generations together, so that they should continue visibly and tangibly to hand on the truth and the life from man to man; and on the other hand, the freedom of the Spirit, and the open heaven of revelation, individual opportunity for the fullest development and expression, the transcendental vision, as with St. Paul, who declares that 'though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him no more,' the vision by which each soul may see Christ for himself through direct and immediate communion with the Spirit of God, that Spirit whose testimony within the soul is the supreme authority and ground of certitude, who takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to men with fresh power and new conviction, who can at any moment authorize initiations of change and

[1] Montanus.

progress, which yet do not and cannot break the succession of a continuous life of the Spirit in the churches, — such were the terms of the real issue between Catholicism and Montanism, which still wait, after eighteen centuries, for some larger or final adjustment." [1]

To revive this issue in every age that bade fair to forget its existence, and to settle down into contentment with the institutional and conventional, has been the office of the long and noble line of Christian Mystics. The intensely practical and busy day in which we live seems little likely to find any place for, or to show any sympathy with, the mystic. Nearly half a century ago Vaughan pointed out — not without some signs of satisfaction — that Britain had been poor in mystics. As "Atherton" puts it: —

"Our island would be but a spare contributor to a general exhibition of mystics. The British cloister has not one great mystical saint to show. Mysticism did not, with us, prepare the way for the Reformation. John Wickliffe and John Tauler are a striking contrast in this respect. In the time of the Black

[1] Allen, *Christian Institutions*, p. 103. The whole chapter on "The Ministry in the Second Century" is of distinct value.

Death, the Flagellants could make no way with us. Whether coming as gloomy superstition, as hysterical fervour, or as pantheistic speculation, mysticism has found our soil a thankless one."[1] Yet this is but a partial and rather shallow generalization. It is true only from the standpoint of one who thinks of the mystic as always standing apart from the common affairs of life wrapt in his vision. The great mystics have indeed seen visions and dreamed dreams; but ecstasy has been merely the occasional experience of the occasional individual. The great and mightily influential rank and file have been quiet, industrious, charitable, and sincerely pious folk, who did their daily work in the light of God's glory shining upon them from the face of Christ, and in the comfort of God's will interpreted immediately to their hearts by the voice of the Spirit.

There is contrast, as "Atherton" contends, between Wickliffe and Tauler; but it is incidental rather than essential, circumstantial rather than fundamental. Wickliffe was almost as real a mystic as Tauler, but less of a quietist. The notion that the mystic must

[1] *Hours with the Mystics*, ii. 253.

needs be odd and grotesque in order to substantiate his claim to membership in the brotherhood is a mischievous one. The outstanding mystics have borne testimony to strange experiences and walked in unconventional paths, it is true ; but even in their cases there has been such a tendency on the part of their biographers to emphasize, if not to exaggerate, this side of their lives that tradition has become miserably warped and distorted. We should probably find a woman of strong good sense and hearty good humor, as well as of extraordinary executive ability, if we could pierce the veil of legend that hides as well as canonizes St. Teresa. The practical efficiency of Madame Guyon is as far beyond question as her personal charm. The somewhat dim figures of Eckhart and Tauler are majestic rather than grotesque. Molinos and Fénelon were at home among courtiers in the Vatican and at Versailles. The eccentricities of George Fox have been remembered, while the very practical means which he employed to relieve the misery of those who were in jail with him, and to provide for the necessities of the poor, have been forgotten. Bunyan's illapse of transient terror while bell-ringing or

playing tip-cat has obscured his native shrewdness, his quaint humor, his years of peaceful and devoted industry, in such degree as to make him seem abnormal and half repulsive to many a reader of his life who might well have rejoiced in acquaintance with the man himself — typical Englishman as he really was, after all is said.

In an imaginary letter to Flaccus, Plotinus is represented as contending that knowledge has three degrees — opinion, science, and illumination. The means of opinion is sense; of science, dialectic; and of illumination, intuition, which is defined as absolute knowledge founded on the identity of the mind knowing with the object known.[1]

It is not to be supposed that this intuition is necessarily independent of sense and science. The intuitive stage may properly enough be reached by way of these prior stages. It is the stage upon which the mind not merely perceives and reasons, but identifies itself with the material of experience. Christ seems to have had something of this sort in His mind when He uttered some of the more daring and startling sayings about the identity which

[1] Vaughan, *Hours with the Mystics*, i. 86, 87.

might exist between Himself and His disciples. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."[1] "So he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."[2]

The words have been justified in the experience of religion. Christianity has always found some lives to whose general sense of good it has appealed; but they have gone no further than to approve it in a nerveless and complexionless fashion. Others have seen in it that which promised to advantage them in such measure that they have been moved to contend for it. They regard faith as a source of comfort in grief, or of assurance in prospect of death, or of physical and mental serenity — a good policy, for life. Multitudes doubtless accept faith upon these terms. It is a perfectly reasonable course and beyond carping criticism. But the fact remains that religious influence reaches its highest potential only in the man who *feeds* upon his faith. He thinks less of the demands which religion is likely to make upon him, or of the benefits which he is likely to reap from it — but he ponders more upon its intrinsic necessity to him. It is *for him*. He would be lost with-

[1] John vi. 54. [2] John vi. 57.

out it. The object of his faith is not so much an entity apart from himself, beckoning or commanding, as a Spirit with whose essence his own is becoming identified.

Within this sense of immediateness are the hidings of the Mystic's power. As Professor Seth put it, "God ceases to be an object and becomes an experience."[1] All great religions as distinct from merely ecclesiastical revivals have borne witness to the reality of this distinction, and to the power which the "experience of God" confers. This power has shown itself to be strikingly independent of ecclesiastical circumstance. The real Dynamic of Christianity has once and again proven itself to be a thing springing so directly out of spiritual experience that everything else can be treated with relative contempt.

The Reformation and Counter-Reformation afford a case in point. Both were great religious movements designed for diverse ends. Both were religiously powerful in proportion as they realized anew this experience of God. Luther's interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans was really an emphatic statement of the fact that salvation consisted in nothing

[1] Cf. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, Appendix A, p. 339.

less or else than this union of God and man in the experience of faith. Man did not lose his identity, to be sure. Yet the bond which faith established was organic rather than artificial or mechanical. The man justified by faith was regrafted upon the divine stock; rearticulated as a branch to the vine, so that one life current energized the whole organism. The Reformation was fundamentally nothing less than an assertion of the freedom and dignity that are man's prerogative because a Spirit of Wisdom, Light, and Power — which is none other than the Spirit of God Himself — waits to take up His abode not merely *with* him but *in* him, so soon as by the act of faith he shall be reunited to the divine. This freedom was not merely a right of private judgment in the interpretation of Scripture. Beginning the assertion of itself in the matter of Scripture, it was bound to go further until it claimed all regions of thought and conduct for its province. This meant antinomianism in some quarters. But sporadic anarchy is one of the prices which, upon the present level of human imperfection, we must pay for epidemic freedom. Germany's freedom of thought, the scope and daring of her scientific specula-

tion, her rationalism as well as her profound piety, are children of one family, — some natural, some legitimate, but all of Reformation blood.

The Counter-Reformation had two objects, or at least wrought two results. One was to restore the states, the influence, the revenues, and the prestige which Rome had lost. The other was to bring back a better life to the Church itself; for the Reformation, so far as Rome herself was concerned, issued in revival as truly as in schism. The fact that this Counter-Reformation consented to use the Inquisition as an ally, and that the rise of the Jesuits synchronized with it, should not blind us to the fact that it was in a real sense a revival of piety. Spiritual force was developed during this period in Seville and Toledo as well as in Wittenberg and Geneva. Persecution had its way to a lamentable degree. One cannot but wonder what Spain might have become, could the legitimate fruits of the culture of Salamanca and Alcala have ripened and come to the harvest. That was not to be. The "Index Expurgatorius" dealt out equal intolerance to the work of the Arab Averroes, the German Eckhart, and the leaders of

Spain's own contemporary thought like Louis de Leon.[1] It was the privilege of the Inquisition to debase and deform spiritual life; but it could not kill or altogether repress it; and among the strongest witnesses to the power which the life of the Spirit is bound to exert, even when dealing with obdurate material and forced into grotesque and half repulsive forms of expression, stand the lives of St. Teresa and St. Juan of the Cross. There is a curious coincidence between certain expressions of St. Teresa concerning belief in Christ as the only ground of salvation, and Luther's statement of his great thesis of Justification.[2] But, interesting as the attempt might be, it is no part of my purpose to expound the doctrine of these famous Spaniards. I cite them as examples of the fact that leadership in the paths of effective piety was vouchsafed to Romanists as really as to Protestants, though I believe in less degree during that particular century.

The power of the Church — and here I do not mean temporal dominion, but a genuine and legitimate spiritual authority — was mea-

[1] Cf. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, pp. 216 sqq.

[2] Inge, op. cit., p. 222.

sured less by the complexion of the dominant dogma, than by the degree in which believers had experience of a spirit which seemed to be the medium of their inclusion with the divine. This experience might become exaggerated and distorted in their description of it; it might be very soberly and simply portrayed; widely different means might be recommended to others as likely to be instrumental in introducing them to the same saving grace or knowledge. All these things were of relatively minor import. The thing that gave authority to the Church — Romanist, Lutheran, Reformed — was the fact that in her some men found, and other men perceived that they found, an experience which proved to be a practical salvation. It was an experience which can be described only as an illapse of a spirit, not their own, which brought them into unity with the source of life and goodness.

As though to remind us that the Dynamic of Christianity is divinely impartial in the use of its instruments and loves to confound little men by an inclusiveness which they can neither understand nor stomach, we are permitted to see this same phenomenon in the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth and the Tractarian

movement of the nineteenth century in England. More delightful essays in Ecclesiastical Biography than those contained in Sir James Stephen's second volume bearing that title may have been written; and sprightlier ones than those in which Mr. Augustine Birrell exercises his nimble wit upon the Protestant Reformation, Cardinal Newman, and the Christian Evidences, — but I venture to doubt whether they have been published. Both these accomplished laymen, the one in the best style of the Edinburgh Reviewers, the other in the less impressive though more scintillant manner of the later English journalism, — studying anything with Mr. Birrell is a little like viewing a landscape by the light of rockets and Roman candles, — have borne witness to the profound and lasting interest exerted by religious revival. It seems to be one of the things that men can never let alone for very long. They must hark back to it, if for no other purpose than to explain to themselves, and incidentally to others, that it is not, after all, very significant. In saying this, I do not for a moment imply that Sir James Stephen and Mr. Birrell are to be numbered among those who affirm by means of the pains they take

to deny. The "Evangelical Succession" and "The Clapham Sect" are tributes of honest respect and affection. The essays of Mr. Birrell upon religious leaders and movements are as reverent and affectionate as circumstances will permit them to be. Both bear witness, however, to the fact that in the revival under Wesley, Whitefield, and their successors, and in the counter-revival under Keble and Newman, something came to pass for which mere superficial circumstance fails to account. We have but half told the story, when we have described the parsonage of Samuel Wesley at Epworth and the remarkable family that it sheltered; or the inn at Gloucester, and the train of events inaugurated by Whitefield's birth there. As we go on to the formation of the Methodist society at Oxford, the meeting with the Moravians on the voyage to America, even to the innumerable marchings and countermarchings of the Great Itinerant over England, the preaching to the Kingsbridge colliers, the stupendous labors as author, editor, translator, organizer, and all the rest of it, we are still conscious that we are in the region of circumstance rather than of essence. What we behold is, after all, to use Mr. Brier-

ly's suggestive phrase, but a "deposit of the Unseen." [1] The end of the Evangelical Revival was little less than social revolution, as we trace it in the work of men like Wilberforce and Shaftesbury. The means do not seem to account for it.[2]

The same condition fronts us as we examine the so-called Oxford Movement, which bore to the Evangelical Revival a relation comparable to that connecting the Counter-Reformation with the Reformation proper. It was a movement in reaction; but it was also a movement in advance. It damned the heretic and the schismatic; but it caught something of his fervor, and it did not altogether disdain his methods. A wave of mediævalism swept over Oxford. There was an awakening of interest in Church history; in the world-old question of the sources of authority; in hagiology; in the Church itself as an institution; in the significance, and especially the material adjuncts and instruments, of worship. In short, it was a revival of ecclesiastical romanticism. The leaders were men of singular charm, —

[1] J. Brierly, *Studies of the Soul.*

[2] Note also the repeated references to Wesley in Sir George O. Trevelyan's *American Revolution*, pt. ii.

the charm that almost always results when great simplicity of life and manner and great willingness to serve the poor and humble are joined to great intellectual subtilty and a high degree of intellectual cultivation. It is safe to predict for Newman a long vogue. Tract XC may die, — is, I suppose, dead, — but as Mr. Birrell has said, it is almost the only bit of its author's writing which we do not, upon thinking of, wish to sit down with and re-read.[1]

Yet it is hard to account for this vogue upon any coldly rational basis. Newman's dialectic is almost preternaturally trenchant and agile. The reader rejoices in him as in a sleight-of-hand performer whose processes seem to be as simple and legitimate as his results are amazing, — but he is a sleight-of-hand performer still. The man of judicial temper knows that the platform on which he stands, and the apparently simple though really complex paraphernalia which he brought in with him at the beginning of the performance, are genuinely significant features of it all. The whole thing is implicit in them. With Newman the premisses are everything,

[1] *Res Judicatæ*, Am. ed., p. 151.

and none probably knew better than he, that the touch of a German scholar's little finger would endanger his whole theological scheme. Yet this is not to imply that Newman was guilty of chicane. He was the exponent of a genuine revival. He was genuinely possessed of its spirit. With genuine singleness of heart he sought its ends. The "Apologia" is a true Pilgrim's Progress, scarcely less fascinating than Bunyan's and to be treated with kindred respect. It would be wrong to say of the men whom he led to Rome that they were perverts of his dialectic juggling, although some of them doubtless fancied themselves to be. The majority of them were honest converts to the reawakened religious spirit which burned with so unmistakable a flame in Newman's life. This spirit was genuine, and beyond the cavil of any but a bigot. The question may fairly be raised whether Hurrell Froude — to cite the case of one of the most brilliant, enthusiastic, and short-lived of the Tractarians — did not effect as much for the cause of religious progress by his brief and erratic display of half-misguided energy, as he could have done had he dawdled for two or three score years over the walnuts and port

of an Oxford common room, keeping a more rational faith as a deposit, but never adventuring anything in its behalf. The Oxford Movement and its ritualistic appendix must be judged in the light not merely of its irrational foundations and its innumerable accessory absurdities, but of its devotion to high, if not the highest, ideals, its practical piety, and its work among the poor.

If space sufficed, it would be interesting to continue the discussion of these reawakenings of the religious sense, especially as they have been manifested in what are technically called "revivals" or "missions" in Protestant and Romanist churches alike. The great awakening of the eighteenth century in New England, the revival period of the later fifties in the nineteenth century, the extraordinary influence exerted through such men as Moody, Drummond, and a host of humble co-workers, as the century drew toward its close, are all phenomena of extraordinary scientific interest. Such revivals bear every sign of being sæcular, and so bound to recur. They speak of a Power resident among men, and influencing them daily and ordinarily. They speak further of a purpose and endeavor on the part

of this Power not to rest in the ordinary, but to reach out after complete dominion. This dominion is established by quiet and imperceptible degrees in part. It is no less truly advanced by great and sudden conquests. Its victories are won often by seemingly crude and imperfect means. They are accompanied by conflict with its attendant pains and penalties. Dust and confusion sometimes hide the result. Men not infrequently mistake the incident for the essence, the circumstance for the end, in estimating the effects of such religious reawakenings. Yet upon the whole, the history of the Christian Church would seem to show it to be under the influence of — perhaps it would be more exact to say the crude and imperfect instrument of — a Power which moves upon bodies of men as a will makes its presence felt upon subordinate wills — not disdaining their utterance of its behests, because the behests are sometimes misunderstood and always inadequately interpreted, nor the service of their hands, because the things the hands build are made of wood, hay, and stubble, as well as of silver and gold. The day will declare the quality of the structure, and the Spirit is patient.

IX

THE WITNESS OF INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE

In the last chapter we discussed the evidence which the history of organized Christianity affords to the existence of some Power or Force resident among men, and working consistently and patiently through their crude religious societies; disdaining none of them, as it would seem, though naturally finding some relatively efficient and others almost hopelessly impracticable. In this chapter we propose to discuss the testimony of individual experience to the existence and immanence of this same Power.

A high degree of significance attaches to the interest aroused by the recent attempts of the so-called "new psychologists" to deal with religious phenomena, especially with the phenomena of conversion. Many of these attempts have been crude to the point of absurdity. None of them has been really

adequate and satisfying. The method of the *questionnaire*, with its invitation to introspection, and its premium upon the testimony of exaggerated self-consciousness, has been ludicrously overworked. There has been a distinct tendency, too, to estimate experience in terms of the extraordinary and abnormal. This is perhaps the chief criticism to be made upon Professor James's "Varieties of Religious Experience." It is true that he anticipates it in his preface, admitting that he has "loaded his lectures with concrete examples," and that he has "chosen these among the extremer expressions of the religious temperament." No one who reads to the end of his lectures — and most who begin are fain to go on to the last page — would think of accusing their author of intentionally caricaturing any phase of religious experience. Yet in point of fact, the impression which they leave is that most of these particular experiences have been arranged for inspection by being reft from their proper environment, or made abnormally significant by the introduction of elements really foreign to them. It is as legitimate as it is convenient, when examining the structure of a slice of

tissue under the microscope, to throw its minute conduits into high relief by filling them with coloring matter. But the color which is so essential to the picture is none the less foreign to the structure of the tissue, and is bound to mislead the student if not duly allowed for. Now the souls which lend themselves best to the purposes of the psychologist's syllabus are almost always those whose experiences are more or less colored by neurotic temperament, or sentimental habit, or an exaggerated self-esteem. These accessories by no means invalidate the reality of their religious experience, but they do influence it, and hence are liable to mislead the casual student into fancying that the abnormal color is native to the experience, and one of the notes of it.

Yet the abnormal has significance ; and where its exceptional character is due to the quantity rather than the quality of the experience, — to its intensity or range rather than to its complexion, — the significance often possesses very great and immediate value. In reviewing the testimony presented in such volumes as Professor Starbuck's "Psychology of Religion," or Professor James's "Varieties

of Religious Experience," one is impressed anew with the truth of Schelling's theory of the Iliad and the Odyssey of the human spirit. "The spirit has its Iliad, its tale of struggle with brutal and natural forces, and then its Odyssey, when out of its painful wanderings it returns to the Infinite."[1] It is well said. The hidings of Homer's power lie in the fact that headstrong Achilles with his sulkiness, his courage, his prowess in the field, and world-faring Odysseus, πολύτροπος καὶ πολύμητις, are congenial to our experience. No one can recall the pages of Augustine's "Confessions," or Bunyan's "Grace Abounding," without a glad recognition of their genuine epic quality. Indeed, the average reader may very well go further. The most casual review of his own experience will possibly convince him that his spiritual struggles and the wanderings through which he went before finding the place in the world meant to be his home have been as really epic. The range and scope of them seem universal, although the physical man himself may very likely always have walked a nar-

[1] Cf. Fairbairn, *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 212.

row round; for it sometimes chances that the soul which makes its nominal dwelling-place in a home-staying body is the widest and most adventurous traveler. One of the reasons why clergymen who really hold and use the "cure of souls" often care so little for the theatre is that the tinsel and pinchbeck of its melodrama seem cheap and childish beside the genuine comedy and tragedy in the experience of human hearts. Farce accords well with the stage and justifies itself; but serious acting seems thin and inadequate, making its appeal primarily to the man of small imagination, who is content to rest in the form and appearance of things.

It is interesting, and I think significant, to note here the parallelism between this experience of the human soul and Hegel's philosophy of the Trinity. In his thought of it, the doctrine of the Trinity was neither an invention of schoolmen, nor a dogma of the Church, nor an esoteric mystery whose terms are partially and miraculously revealed in Scripture, but a form under which the divine must exist and be perceived by men. This existence is known to us first as pure Being or Thought. Out of this Being is eternally

generated the object of His thought. It is the Word wherein the Father utters himself, — of one substance with Him, — begotten, not made. But the Word cannot live apart from Him, — the differentiation is not a separation, — the particular is never to be set in opposition to the universal. Hence, in the eternal reconciliation which takes place, in the continuous and necessary return of the Son to the Father, in the retranslation of the Word into the divine Thought, we are face to face with the movement of the Spirit. This vast Iliad-Odyssey cycle is a universal experience. All true life of necessity — and the higher the life the more cogent the necessity — passes through its great sæcular experiences of birth, consciousness of individual and hence partial existence, and return into complete union with its source again. So far forth, the deeper experience of religion which involves conversion in the technical sense is normal and to be expected. This does not necessarily mean that the development of spiritual self-consciousness and the process of conversion must be attended with pain; it certainly does not mean that it must be attended with excitement. But men being what

they are, it is morally certain that both anxiety and excitement will occasionally appear; precisely as pain and fear too often prove to be the accessories of physical parturition.[1]

Yet however grotesque the forms which the phenomenon of conversion may sometimes assume, and however inadequate the scientific attempts to investigate it may be, the reality of the phenomenon itself is beyond dispute. It has been so many times dissipated as a dream of overwrought imaginations only to insist again upon recognition, that the effort to get rid of it has grown wearisome. It has thriven upon persecution; it has refused to yield to ridicule; it has held its own against skepticism; it has even survived indifference and contempt. It is to be reckoned with by every honest student of religious

[1] Miss Frances Power Cobbe will not be suspected of overmuch complaisance toward conventional religious experience. Yet in this connection the reader will recall her lines: —

"God draws a cloud over each gleaming morn,
Would you know why?
It is because all noblest things are born
In agony.

"Only upon a Cross of pain and woe
God's Son must lie;
Each soul redeemed from sin and death must know
Its Calvary."

phenomena; and it has its message to the seeker after the Dynamic of Christianity.

What this significance is may be discerned by considering a few more or less typical instances of conversion. The first which I cite is that of Henry Alline, the Nova Scotian evangelist, whose experience is related at length by Professor James.[1] Alline seems to have been a youth of distinctly estimable life, and a leader among his fellows in the enterprises of their simple and rather rude society. Fond of games and dancing, he was quickly susceptible to the presence and opinions of his friends, although, as sometimes happens with persons of neurotic temperament, the susceptibility was superficial rather than fundamental. He was influenced to temporary accord in matters of conduct, rather than to a like way of thinking or to a like scheme of life. It was into the midst of this apparently gay and thoughtless existence that conviction of sin forced its way. Melancholy came with it. Like most men of natural strength of character and keen self-consciousness, Alline strove long and hard to hide the anguish of his soul behind an untroubled front. He

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 159, 173, sqq.

went his usual ways, led his fellows in their wonted merriment, — taking care apparently that it should always be innocent, — and kept, as he says, his "round of duties." But he knew no peace. He could scarcely find surcease of agony. "Still, all that I did or could do, conscience would roar night and day." The crisis came on the 26th of March, 1775, and it was as momentous and real in the sphere of individual experience as the date of Lexington or Bunker Hill in the annals of national history. It had been a day of thrice accentuated pain. Alline had come in from wandering in the fields and lamenting his miserable estate, when his eye lighted upon Psalm xxxviii. in a torn Bible which lay upon a chair near by. "It took hold of me," he says, "with such power that it seemed to go through my whole soul." After a little, joy took the place of sorrow, and peace — if a joy which rose to ecstasy can be said to give peace — succeeded to anxiety. The question was settled forever. There was never again any slightest doubt as to Whose he was or Whom he served.

Those who are interested and expert in nervous pathology will mark the chronology

of Alline's experience, — the profound depression at sunset, the hyperæsthesia of the later evening, and the fear lest, after sleeping, the depression would return. The sequence is normal and doubtless significant; but it explains nothing. Had his case been merely subjective and his experience naught but the unrest produced by overwrought nerves, we should expect either collapse, or a return of depression, or a slow and gradual recovery of tone. Nothing of the sort seems to have occurred. Alline went through a crisis of the soul as real and definite as any crisis in fever, and through much sorrow entered into joy. The scientific observer is almost compelled, however sorely against his will, to have recourse to the stated religious phrases. Here was a return home after long wandering. It was a new birth into a world so large that the old world became relatively insignificant. The experience bore to the man who passed through it, and it bears to the candid student of it, all the marks of the definite influence of one personality upon another.

I cite a second case, differing in some respects from the above, which fell under my own observation. It was that of a boy born into a

well-ordered Christian home. His training was consonant with the best American traditions. The home life was frugal, busy, and highly intelligent. Books and papers were abundant, and the greater news of the day was discussed, but both reading and talk maintained a pretty clear distinction between the temporary and the permanent. Although the family resources were not so large but that strict economy was practiced and taught, the best available school and university advantages were put at the disposal of the children. Regular attendance upon Church and Sunday-school was enjoined, yet in such a manner as to make the boy feel that the injunction flowed from the conviction rather than the whim or the prejudice of his parents. It was distinctly represented to him that possession of the whole world would prove to be of small moment to the man who traded the life of his soul for it; and that the truest culture of the soul depended upon personal allegiance to Jesus Christ. The whole trend of the family influence went to prove life to be an immensely solemn, but in no sense whatever a sombre thing. It became sombre only when some element of dishonor in its relation to God or man was invited into

it. Much was made of the cleanliness of mind, speech, person, and blood, to which a hearty outdoor life of work and play ministers; and, as in so many families where religion sweetens the temper and whets the sense of proportion, the intercourse of the home was lightened by the play of a very keen and abundant humor.

It was in the midst of this busy, wholesome, and singularly unfettered life that this boy (as I have heard him say) grew into the consciousness of his soul. It would be difficult to enumerate the steps whereby he realized his own individuality, and at the same time realized the necessity of identifying himself with the universal. "Lost" is distinctly the word to be used in any attempt to describe his situation. It connotes nothing Dantesque, but rather the deep concern and the keen restlessness of a child astray and uncertain of ability to regain his home. The way of his duty was not altogether obscure, but it was a serious question whether he could bring himself to take it, involving as such a course threatened to do some slight measure of publicity. The Church stood before him as representing the Family of Believers. He knew

himself to be a believer. The battle was fought over the question as to whether or not he would join the Family. He has said that he sometimes discussed the question aloud "with himself," as the phrase commonly goes, but really with a Presence which was not quite himself objectified, until at last he decided upon his course of action, joined the Church upon a day when it seemed as though the concentrated gaze of men and angels must needs shrivel his small soul, — and entered into peace.[1] It would be going too far to say that this peace always continued unbroken. There was occasional inward conflict over minor matters consequent upon the main decision, and there was one great intellectual struggle years afterward which marked the life and enriched the experience, but there was never any real questioning of allegiance. The later struggles bore to the former a relation like that of the War of 1812 and the Rebellion to the War of Independence. The Revolution ushered in a new national life; the later wars were activities of this new life which

[1] The writer hopes it to be needless to say that this experience is given with the full, albeit hesitant, consent of his friend.

only developed and confirmed it. There was something of proven worth to fight for; as Odysseus after his return had to oust the suitors, but found his arm strengthened for the conflict by a new realization of his home's value and essential soundness.

Still another variant of this experience is found in the case of a friend of the late Dr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham. Of exemplary life, and reverent in his attitude toward religion, although not counting himself or counted by others to be a "religious" man, his "call" came upon a quiet Sunday afternoon, as he lay in the sunlight upon a high down overlooking the sea. No word but "call" seems equal to the experience. Through the summer stillness, and expressing its message in terms of peace and beauty, a Voice searched his heart. It was in some sort consonant with Wordsworth's voice of the sea: —

> "Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
> And doth with his eternal motion make
> A sound like thunder — everlastingly."

Yet it was a gentler and a more compelling voice. It woke a soul and made a revelation. The man in a real sense found God

that day, turned toward Him, and entered into a sacred fellowship which gave new significance to life.

It would be easy to multiply instances, and to cite among them startling revolutions of thought and conduct. Professor James somewhere says that reasons should be given why men *do* pray rather than why they should pray. Prayer is a phenomenon worth study. So is conversion, whether it be sudden, violent, and easily objectified in all its stages, or so gentle and gradual as scarcely to admit of isolation and analysis. I have chosen to cite instances of the quieter and more clearly rational sort. Fundamentally, however, they differ but little from the revivalistic and (to use Professor James's unpleasant word) orgiastic type. In them all appears the consciousness of self as somehow distinct from the universal, and yet belonging to the universal. An appeal is made to the soul to return to its source and home, not by means of surrender of individuality, but by such a yielding of the will as shall establish permanent and complete harmony. The individual is to belong to and share in the life of the universal as the branch is identified with and

shares the life of the vine. This appeal may be voiced in terms as widely different as the thunders of the law and the invitations of grace; but it is never impersonal. It comes from a personal source. It makes direct appeal as from a person to a person. Not infrequently the soul in its perplexity or hesitation argues with "itself" aloud. Yet the argument is not really with itself. The protagonist in these dramas is a Person distinct from the hesitant and fearful, or perhaps obstinate, self. Not merely a power but a Person, not ourselves, making for righteousness is felt to be dealing with us. Nor does He merely come in from without as an external influence. In the most normal cases He appears as a universal Person resident within. It is in the abnormal nature, in which the immanent forces are but half-recognized and developed, or have been starved, that there is grave conflict as with a power trying to force the conquest of life's citadel.[1]

I pass on now to note another phenomenon of the spiritual life scarcely less significant than the phenomenon of conversion. Some

[1] Cf. C. C. Everett's essay on "Mysticism," in *Immortality and Other Essays*, pp. 70–74.

years ago the writer chanced to be present at a religious service presided over by a man of blameless character and somewhat rare spiritual insight. Most of those whom he addressed were clergymen. The theme with which he set himself to deal was the consecration of Christian life. His scheme of religious experience appeared to be something as follows. A man was to expect conversion at some period, and ought, if the conversion were normal, to be able to designate the time of it. This enrolled him as a Christian. Beyond this there lay a Pentecostal opportunity. Its relation to the former experience was like the special illapse of the Spirit upon the Apostles, as compared with the original call which Jesus extended to them when they first became disciples. This was the "Second Blessing," or the "Baptism for Service." It might be, indeed it ought to be, as distinct and definite an experience as conversion. The notes of it were the incoming of new light, the baptism with new power, and the perfect assurance of acceptance. It was implied — though the speaker was himself a notably humble and simple man — that the experience gave further assurance of a

freedom from the power of sin that approached, if it did not attain to immunity. As his service drew to a close, the leader asked all those among his hearers who had attained to this experience of "Baptism with the Spirit" to manifest it by some sign. They were almost without exception devout and faithful men. Yet the hoped-for response to this invitation came from but one person, and he, without invidious distinction, might be reckoned among the lighter and less forceful of the company. It is safe to say, however, that no one present failed to feel something of the significance of the appeal. The sincerity and simplicity of the speaker gave evidence of an underlying experience which was as real as the honesty of the hearers who declined to cram their own experiences into his formula; but it was equally certain that these men, most of whom were trained in the study of spiritual phenomena, declined to accept their leader of that day as a guide into a universal or general experience. When he spoke of a spiritual quickening as at the instance of a person lending power and grace to human life, he took them with him. This was something of which they knew. But

when he attempted to treat this influence as external to normal Christian life, coming down from above, and leading the will captive until the subject of this "Second Blessing" became a mere puppet in the Spirit's hands, they balked.

In doing so they represented the better sense of the Christian Church in every age. Religion of the most spiritual type is suspicious of hierarchies of experience. The Spirit has no inner circle of votaries. He is immanent in the world and in the life of man. All genuine life is due to His effort to express His presence and to accomplish His will — not from without but from within. In this attempt He daily wrestles with obdurate material. This material is sometimes so obdurate that the Spirit finds Himself incapable under present conditions of subduing it. It will not lend itself to the expression of divine truth in terms of goodness, or respond to revelation in terms of love. This is the case of the "hard-hearted" man — the man who will not yield. Sometimes he never yields. Sometimes the obduracy is broken down by the shock of catastrophe, sometimes it is softened in the fires of affliction, until it lends itself to the

formative influences of this indwelling Power. Here we have the case of marked and perhaps spectacular conversion.

Again, as in the case of Alline, it is possible to establish a category of conversions which are painful to the subject, but not revolutionary in the eye of the world. The struggle here is of a sort that might very well be borne easily by a coarser nature; but the material with which the Spirit deals is of a fine and sensitive texture. It responds quickly to what other men would call slight stimulus. It vibrates long. The man is so highly organized that he is immediately and sometimes painfully conscious of spiritual appeals to which his fellows are blind and deaf; very much as the receiver of a Marconi instrument is keenly alive to influences to which everything else around is entirely obdurate. Alline was like a man who is conscious that his eye has capacity to see the rays beyond the violet, but who dreads to open it to the new revelation, or to develop the new power, lest the well-known actinic properties of these rays should somehow mark and change him. The battle is fought out, — the new capacity insists upon recognition and exercise, — the

natural, conservative elements in the nature resist, but finally yield, and at once the man takes on power and enters into relative peace. He takes on power because he sees now where other men are blind. He finds peace because he discovers the new region of experience to be one which fits his capacities. He has entered into the environment to which he is adapted, that is to say, he *lives* in the scientific sense of the word. He is the convicter and inspirer of other men in so far as he leads them to seek a higher environment to which their own latent powers will develop adaptability. He may of course sometimes partially misinterpret the message which has changed his own life. He will certainly do so, if he systematically disparage the simpler and more commonplace revelations of ordinary duty. Few men, however, who pass through a great experience of conversion ever do this. They realize that the plain is as necessary as the mountain to a wide field of vision. The more frequent danger is that they may separate the two regions unduly, and attempt to differentiate the principle of life which cultivates the plain from that which inspires the vision of the mountain-top.

Hence the latter two of my three examples of conversion will generally be accepted as the more normal. In the case of the boy, allegiance to the higher life of which he had grown conscious seemed to demand specific and definite action. His general training had been of so wholesome and devout a sort that no revolutionary experience was demanded of him. He was invited rather to take the consequences of the attainment of his spiritual majority. In the case of Dr. Dale's friend, the call was couched in very much the same terms; except that with him life had become settled. It was a well-ordered and, upon the whole, practically devout life. He was simply asked to recognize and own the divine source of it.

It may well be asked whether such cases as these, and the ten thousand variants upon them which might easily be cited, will submit themselves to the rule of the evolutionary hypothesis. Does their process accord with the scheme of development? The question is a perfectly fair one and should be welcomed.

In the first place, few of those who have studied psychical phenomena without prejudice will venture to deny that conversion of

the genuine and thorough sort is a step in development. It generally marks a deepening and enrichment of experience, and an increase of power. The converted man, however humble and restricted in cultivation, means, and knowledge of the world, is a larger man by reason of his genuine "experience of religion." Moreover, this development, where it is genuine, is due to a resident, or, as I should much prefer to say, immanent force. The governing influence is not an external power mechanically applied, but one whose seat seems rather to be within. As has been noted before, the man's struggle is commonly said to be "with himself." Yet it is as when Jacob struggled with the angel, who represented divine life and truth translated not only into human, but into Jacobean terms. Jacob's wrestling was with the personification of his own conscience — the not-himself in himself, which made for righteousness. So the struggle of which converted men often speak is with something more than mere objectified self. They have met and striven with the divine principle resident or immanent in self.

Moreover, the development which takes

place under the influence of this power in the phenomenon of conversion is from incoherence to coherence. Conversion normally makes for the integration of life in the individual and in society. It is a return of the son who wanders to his place in the home. It is a restoration of the lost sheep to its orderly position in the flock. It is a gathering of the disjointed and heterogeneous individuals who live selfishly and perhaps in strife, into a family where they shall feel toward one another as brethren. These are stereotyped terms; but they accord so well with experience as to survive the process. They become common without ceasing to be sacred, which is good proof that they express a truth that is vital — how vital appears only when we set the picture teaching of Jesus beside the polysyllabic definition of Spencer,[1] and observe that the definition of life wrought out by the philosopher seems but a

[1] In saying, this I am not unmindful of the limitations of the Spencerian definition of Evolution and the extreme vagueness of some of its terms. Since the present chapter was written, we have been again reminded of this by Professor James's exceedingly clever, albeit somewhat cavalier, review of Spencer's Autobiography in the *Atlantic Monthly* for July, 1904. By "integration" I mean the development (or reëstablishment) of organic unity.

translation of the idea which lay at the centre of Christ's teaching. Jesus distinctly taught that life in the Kingdom of God was life developed from fragmentariness to unity under the impulse of a force resident or immanent among men; and that, moreover, this life should bear the note of eternity because of its power to adapt itself to environment. It was the life fitted to dominate and feed upon circumstance instead of being subdued to circumstance's whim. It could distinguish between accident and essence, moulding itself to the divinely essential, and in turn moulding the merely accidental.

One of the fundamental doctrines taught by the founder of Christianity was the presence of the Spirit. The divine Essence was with men, making personal revelation of Himself to their understandings, and personal appeal to their hearts and wills. This divine life in the heart of a man and in the heart of society was not in any sense alien to the principle of life which appears in what we call the physical or material universe. The Power which works in the processes of nature, or expresses its thought in terms which we formulate into the theorems of geometry or the well-

attested laws of physics, is fundamentally One. The resident or immanent Force which moves in the evolutionary process, and forms the central element in our definitions of Evolution, is identical with the Power not ourselves, making for righteousness, which students of the phenomena of conduct are obliged to assume. We are driven to ascribe to this Power certain attributes which are personal. Now when we come to the experience of the developing human soul, we find ourselves in immediate touch with a Power which we know to be personal in precisely the same way in which we recognize personality in the men and women about us. We do not need to clothe a bare idea in a suit of attributes in order to know a man when we meet him. Like in us speaks to like in him, and the knowledge is immediate. So with the Ultimate Force or the Universal Life with Whom our souls have to do. We deal with Him as with a person, by an instinct so quick and compelling as to make the processes of logic seem slow and cumbrous. These processes of logic are not ruled out. Any region whither they cannot come is likely to prove an unwholesome residence for men's souls. But they are

here as guests rather than as servants. Like sappers and miners parading a well-paved city street, they are honorable and necessary folk; but not likely to be pressed into service, because the way is so clear that no traveler can well err in it.

This Dynamic of Christianity in the individual life is the Spirit of God. He is known by those who have had deepest spiritual experience as essentially a Person, however varied may be their attempts at definition. He is a resident or immanent Force. His residence makes for development. Under His influence the individual at his best and highest feels that he is at once more and less than an individual. The man realizes himself to be a member of another — he comes out from God.[1] The Spirit's residence also tends toward universal harmony. Under His influence individuals are led to perceive their mutual relations and to fulfill their social duties. They adapt themselves to the needs of the common life. They tend under His continued guidance to perceive the ultimate unities of a real universe. They know at last that the

[1] C. C. Everett, *Immortality and Other Essays*, pp. 62 sqq.

Ultimate Force of the philosopher, and the resident force of the physicist and biologist, and the immanent Spirit of the theologian, are but different names, representing different glimpses, of one God.

X

THE NEW FREEDOM OF FAITH

When Christianity appeared and began to claim the allegiance of men, it held out two definite promises to them. One was the promise of freedom; the other the promise of peace. Jesus told His disciples that they should know the truth, and the truth should make them free. He compared their freedom to that which a loyal son enjoys in his father's house, where he is not bound by petty rules or ordinances, but is recognized as an heir and prospective owner, who has right and claim to the reasonable use of the resources and opportunities of the home. Moreover, when Jesus pronounced His benediction upon those who were to carry on His work, it took the highly significant form of the salaam — the ascription of peace. If the heritage which He was leaving to them meant anything, it was that they had no longer cause to fear circumstance. Their hearts were no longer to be

troubled. They were never again to be afraid. They were not of the world, and the world could harm none but its own. Beyond the world they had no cause to fear, because the mansions of the Father's house awaited them.

It is to be noted, however, that this freedom was not to be conferred upon the disciples as a deposit which they could hoard up and draw upon. They were not to be taken out of the world or isolated from the play of human vicissitude. Their freedom and their peace were to come through the possession of the truth; and into the truth the Spirit was to lead them. He was to take up His home in them, abide permanently with them, speak through their lips, and work by means of their hands; but in particular He was to endue them with adequacy to circumstance. The disciple's freedom and peace were to be of the dynamic sort, like the freedom of a well-found ship at sea, or the splendid confidence of an eagle in the air. Neither is a spoiled favorite of nature. The "attraction of gravitation" stands ready to sink the ship or dash the eagle's life out against the earth beneath. The storm lifts up its hand against both alike.

Yet both are so well fitted to their several elements that they translate the threat of gravitation into terms of stability, and make the power of the storm serve them, whether they scud before it, or beat up against it to their desired haven.

St. Paul took up the same doctrine and incorporated it into all his greater Epistles. The believer was the true freeman. He was delivered from the bondage of precept and custom that he might live his life according to its real nature, moulding its activities to the norm of a perfect man. This was not to be by giving free play to passion and fleshly desire. To give the body free rein was to turn life upside down, to submit to tyranny of the most degrading sort, and to invite an internecine war in the members. The life which was to be free and peaceful must be free from the dominion of sin and the fear of death; that is to say, it must possess a resident or immanent force capable of adapting its activities to its circumstances in the interests of harmonious and consistent existence. It was to go on through life and death, things present and things to come, subjecting circumstance to the synthetic chemistry of the Spirit's touch,

which could extract from seemingly base things the materials for the nourishment of abiding life. This was not necessarily to be an easy process; but it was to be so sure a process for the man who really opened his life to the entrance of the efficient Power as to relieve him of fear and to clothe him with peace. The presence of the Spirit was not to involve such a usurpation of the agencies of a man's personality as to render him immune against temptation or free from blunders. The best material which he could put at the Spirit's disposal was likely to remain more or less obdurate and intractable; but there could be no question about the ultimate success of life unless the man deliberately chose to be a traitor. St. Paul felt so great a confidence in his own committal of himself to One Who held the secret of eternal life, that anxiety about the casual incidents of earthly experience seemed almost absurd.

Principal Fairbairn, in criticising the Nicene theology, has said that "the Church, when it thought of the Father, thought more of the First Person in relation to the Second than of God in relation to man; when it thought of the Son, it thought more of the Second Per-

son in relation to the First than of humanity in relation to God." [1] He might have added that the Church then and since has failed to think of the Spirit at all. Christ's fear, when He told the disciples that it was expedient for Him to go away lest the Comforter or Helper come not, has been in some measure realized. Men have been wont to think of the Spirit as a divine influence coming into a man's heart from a God who dwelt without, or let down upon the world from a God who dwelt above, — an influence sometimes with men and sometimes absent, sometimes at work in the world and sometimes quiescent or withdrawn. They have thought of Him as bringing freedom from sin by some cryptic process, and conferring peace as a sort of spiritual commodity to be dealt out to Heaven's favorites. They have undertaken to define His "office-work," to hedge His path, and straitly mark His goings and methods. So technical and stilted have been their phrases relative to His presence and activity in the world, that the common sense of many men has revolted. They have come to think of the doctrine of the Spirit as out of relation to common life, and

[1] *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 91.

to be handed over as a peculiar possession to the revivalist, or to the fanatical followers of obscure sects. Men easily lose vital faith in the power which manifests itself solely or mainly in extraordinary ways. They really believe in the forces which are steadfast, continuous, and applicable to the concerns of every day and every man "by sun and candle light." Hence it was with a deep insight into human nature that Jesus economized His miracle working. Here too has lain the hidings of Christianity's power. More than any other religion it has shown the necessary interdependence of faith and good works — religion and righteousness. Its central truths have always been translatable into common goodness. Its general influences have been exoteric instead of esoteric; they have made for a community instead of a hierarchy of disciples; they have resolutely refused to be cabined or confined within definite organizations or statements of faith. They have always been restless unless their course were free and their opportunity universal. Nowhere has this been truer than in the realm of the world's thought concerning the Spirit. Nowhere, on the other hand, has doctrine been more dis-

torted and belittled. Nowhere has it assumed more fantastic shapes or subserved such fanatic purposes. So far has this gone, that there has come to be grave danger lest the teaching which Jesus seemed definitely to regard as the great doctrine of the future — the doctrine of the growth of the Kingdom under the direction of the Spirit — should be relegated to the limbo of the irrational.

What has been written in this volume is a protest against such a belittling of truth. Vital doctrine is truth which is capable not only of being seized with rapture by the imagination, but of being apprehended in some good degree by the reason and then translated into terms of conduct. The doctrine of the Spirit is of this sort. In its imperfect form as the doctrine of the immanence of God, it has long made its appeal to the imagination. It has seemed good to men to think of God as near at hand and not afar off. But even when they have thought of Him as immanent, it has too often been the presence of a royal guest in a temporary residence which could never be his home that they have pictured. "God in His world" has represented a divine influence *in partibus infidelium*. There is still an unnat-

ural separation between the universe and its soul.

The Christian doctrine of the Spirit would fain relieve the human reason of this seeming contradiction. Great doctrines are great by reason of the clearness with which they discern and define distinctions, as well as by the cogency with which they resolve apparent contradictions and coördinate separate realms of knowledge and experience by their unifying power. No doctrine can hope to solve all mystery or answer all conceivable queries. That doctrine is most vital, and has the best claim upon the faith of reasoning men, whose horizon of mystery incloses the largest area of consistency. It is upon this basis that the doctrine of the Spirit, as Christ taught it, may lay claim to apprehension by man's reason as well as to the stimulation of his imagination. It makes due distinction between what we call "the material universe" and God. But it unifies our knowledge by perceiving the Spirit to inhabit the universe as an immanent and vital Force. He is the soul of it. So far from coming to consciousness in the personality of man, His own personality is the ground and source of all feeling, know-

ledge, and will. His presence is discerned by the component elements of the universe in varying degree. What we rather blindly call "dead matter" knows His presence as force. Gravitation is God's revelation of His presence to a stone. The beasts know His presence so far as their experience can translate the so-called forces of nature into terms of their partial life. Man knows Him not only as force, though He is the source of it; nor as will, though all will grounds its power of initiative and choice in Him; but as a Person, exercising supreme reason in an orderly realm, and exercising it in love, since its object appears to be the coördination of all things into a real universe; and love has no higher office than the satisfaction of the right desires of all living beings by putting them into such relations with one another that they shall enjoy freedom and be crowned with peace.

How far short of entering into their heritage here believers often come is suggested by the most casual study of the phenomena of religious melancholy. Good people who knew their faith to be genuine have sometimes doubted with an awful seriousness whether it were saving faith or not. No one else ques-

tioned their title to discipleship. But a dreadful cloud of uncertainty as to the validity of their "calling and election" shut the sunlight from their sky. Different immediate causes for such unhappiness appear to govern different cases. Yet the general ground of their misfortune would seem to be a view of God that made Him practically impersonal. There was no question in their minds about His power in the universe, and they would have been the first to deprecate any denial of His reason and His love. But in point of fact He was, in their thought of Him, little more than the originator and engineer of a divine scheme. As interpreted into terms of human experience, His will was mechanical. Between the heart of God and the need of man there was interposed the barrier of a device for saving men which wrought with a terrible certainty, but with a no less terrible aloofness from the circumstances of common human life. Much was made of the work of Christ; but here too the forms of speech used in its description were largely impersonal — forensic, if not mechanical. There must needs be a set and formal procedure on the part of him who would avail himself of Christ's sacrifice, and

it was possible that through ignorance or misfortune some man might miss a step in the process and so invalidate the whole. Christians still sometimes come perilously near thinking and speaking of God as a being from whom Christ came to deliver them.

It needs but a re-reading of the Gospels to show how far removed this is from any teaching that Jesus ever uttered. It was impossible that men should come to their inheritance of freedom and peace by any such way as this. His thought of conversion and the life of Christian service was that men were to be the subjects of an experience rather than the objects of a process. That experience was to be an opening of the soul's eyes to God's immediateness, and a yielding of the will to the influences of a divine companionship. The knowledge of God as an Holy Spirit was to crown all. God was to be known as Creator. That was a necessity of reason. He was to be known as translated into terms of love, truth, and service in Christ. That was a fact of human history. But the knowledge of Him as a sacred and satisfying Person, daily meeting human needs by empowering and adapting men to their circum-

stances in the interests of an eternal life, was to be an intimate and vital experience. By introducing them into this the Son was to set them free. The servant was to become the friend, and the faith of the believer to be lost in the sight of the companion.

It is in the light of this truth, shining upon our experience of religion and illuminating our scientific investigation of religious phenomena, that the real ground of theological progress appears. True science is more than logical; it is biological, taking account of a developing rather than a completely developed world. A theological system whose watchword is "back to Christ" is both unscientific and anti-Christian. The word which Jesus left the Church for the guidance of its life was not "back to Me," but "on with the Spirit." There was nothing in His teaching to justify any attempt to cram the life of the second or of the twentieth century back into the language or the experience of the first. No forms which he established were fixed. Everything was elastic. Only certain great vital principles were implanted like leaven in the world's life. This did not for a moment imply that the life of the future was to be disorganized

and abnormal. It was most distinctly to submit itself to law. But the law was to be the law of the immanent Spirit's highly organized and endless life rather than the norm of an outgrown ordinance or dead formula.

It remains to point out some of the results of this neglected truth when it is realized and translated into terms of life.

1. It makes a man at home in the Present. This is not to say that it gives him a sense of the sufficiency of the Present to supply all the needs of his soul; but it does deliver him of the haunting sense that he is born out of due time. No one can read religious poetry, or the extensive and always significant literature of religious autobiography, without noting the degree in which men have looked back with pensive regret to some golden "age of faith," or on with longing to some millennium. This backward aspect is depicted in many forms, from the nursery hymn, —

> "I think when I read that sweet story of old,"

to Newman's exquisite, but highly imaginative picture of mediæval piety in England, beginning, "The fair form of Christianity rose up and grew and expanded like a beau-

tiful pageant from North to South."[1] On the other hand, the longing for the future is voiced in the great mediæval hymns, —

> "O mother dear, Jerusalem,"

and

> "The world is very evil,
> The times are waxing late;
> Be sober and keep vigil,
> The Judge is at the gate."

Indeed, this latter habit of representing the present world to be a vale of tears, and our experience in it as not merely a probation but a dubious and sorry one, has been so frequent among hymn writers as seriously to mar some of our older hymn books. One suspects resignation of having achieved an undue eminence among the Christian virtues. But it should be remembered that this dissatisfaction with present circumstance and suspicion of the future among confessed believers is as nothing when compared with the lamentations of the "agnostics" and the doubters. The late Mr. Lecky's

> "How hard to die, how blessed to be dead,"

has been quoted in an earlier chapter.

[1] Quoted at some length by Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 236.

"The pageant of his bleeding heart" which Matthew Arnold ascribed to Byron might as well be treated as autobiography. He loved to think of himself as

> "Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
> The other powerless to be born."

In thus making his moan, Matthew Arnold expressed a mood entirely consonant with religious doubt, but it is never natural to faith. It is to be noted, however, that the partial faith which would rule God out of natural residence in His world, and take no account of a divine Spirit immanent in man and working out His will by slow degrees in a developing universe, has often produced an identical suspicion of the Present as somehow thrust in anomalously between a past whose life is dead or dying and a future which no man can determine, but which must be anticipated with anxiety.

To all this Christ's doctrine of the Spirit is antipathetic. The man who has had experience of the world's vital principle at work in the development of the universe, and most manifestly at work in the development of the human soul, will be at home in the Present. He will be no shallow proclaimer

or exploiter of the present as the best of all possible worlds. On the contrary, he must believe a better world to be possible to-morrow unless the material with which the Spirit has to work be so obdurate that the pain of its subjection to the new and higher purpose prove great enough to hide the fact of progress. He will remember that the processes of increase and development are sæcular. They observe periods which can be more or less clearly discerned. There are spring-times of lush growth, midsummers when growth halts that maturity may hasten, autumns when fruits of development are garnered for translation into new forms of energy, and winters when all progress seems to be suspended — winters of man's discontent, but which are none the less times of especial susceptibility to new impressions. The seasons of the Spirit are often long. They change so slowly that one man's single day shows little progress. But it is only the pitiably short-sighted man who will therefore deny the progress, or fancy that its verbs have no present tense. "God has so arranged the chronometry of our spirits that there shall be thousands of silent moments between

the striking hours."[1] This is the true Opportunism of Christianity. By means of the immanence of divine Power a believing man is not only made equal to circumstance; he becomes its master; he feeds upon it, and assimilates it. It is this that makes him at home in the Present, and reveals the deeper significance of the old pagan maxim "Carpe diem;" of the Hebrew half-threat, half-promise, "I will feed them with judgment;" and of the Christian assurance, "All things work together for good to them that love God."

2. This larger and more definite doctrine of the Spirit gives a wholesome elasticity to Christian institutions. It provides room for growth in creeds, worship, sacraments, and polity. Now, as a matter of fact, there has always been growth and development here; but to those who held to the doctrine of exact delimitation of Christian faith by Christ and the Apostles, or of an original "deposit of faith" in the treasury of the Church, or to the establishment of a norm of church government in the first century to which all true church organization in later centuries must

[1] Martineau, *Tides of the Spirit.*

conform itself, such development has seemed anomalous and puzzling. It is interesting to note the unanimity with which ultra-orthodox and ultra-heretic have agreed that doctrine which has been developed and whose process of evolution can be shown is thereby invalidated as authority. Here Romanist and Unitarian have met together; Burgon and Huxley have kissed each other. Yet it needs only a casual reading of the Gospels and Epistles to show that such development is implicit in the very nature of Christianity. The divine element was to be resident among believing men, always at work upon the more or less obdurate material which they presented, moulding their experience of religion into new creedal expressions, reorganizing their corporate life in the Church, and ever assuring them anew of the power of initiative with which, as beings made in the image of the Creator, they were intrusted. This means that sometimes old forms are to pass completely away, as the observance of circumcision and the Jewish ritual have passed. It also means that quite as often old forms will be retained, but that they will express a developed and therefore varied message. This is particularly true with

reference to creeds. Every creed that has ever commanded the allegiance of devout and earnest men is from that very fact a sacred symbol. The Church of England does well to retain her Calvinistic Articles, though she ought not to require absolute subscription to them. She does well to set beside these her Arminian liturgy, although again she may go too far in requiring the absolute subjection of the service of public worship to it. These are less contradictory than complementary of one another. Their presence in the Prayer Book relates the faith of the sons logically and legitimately to the faith of the fathers; but it ought never to do so in such a way as to imply that the faith of the sons is not at liberty to profit by the additions and enrichments of three and a half centuries of revelation.

So again with reference to the language of the creeds. It has been held that but one interpretation could possibly be put upon any given phrase in a creed, and that whatsoever was more than this savored of dishonesty. But it is impossible to confine human speech within such fetters. Language will not submit to this slavery. Take, for instance, the clause in the Apostle's Creed relating to the

Resurrection of the Body. Upon the wall of Wickliffe's old church in Lutterworth there is a fresco of the Resurrection in which bones are flying through the air to meet their fellows, as though Ezekiel's Vision were in process of literal fulfillment. It stands for the crude literalism of an unscientific day. A scientific day ought therefore to discard both the crude notion and the form of words which it misinterpreted, some men would say. What, then, is a modern believer to do? He holds instinctively to a faith in a life beyond the grave. Proceeding upon his rational and spiritual principle that he is under obligation to accept the hypothesis whose horizon of mystery includes the largest area of consistency, he believes that this life is to be of the nature of personal existence. I shall still be I, then as now. This means that the necessary apparatus and instruments of personal existence and some sort of personal efficiency must be supplied. What these may be, we do not undertake or care to define; but they represent exactly the office of the body. It is doubtful if any form of words could possibly be devised which could so cogently express the essence of this great hope as those of the Apostle:

"We are sown a natural body, we are raised a spiritual body." The clause in the Creed, "I believe in the Resurrection of the Body," is a paraphrase of this. It is patient of several interpretations. No doubt the average worshiper in Lutterworth Church when the fresco was fresh upon its walls thought this materialistic interpretation of the clause to be the only valid one. But is his crude and irrational notion to bind all later ages? Let us admit that in his day the words meant what the picture portrays, and that he would have felt himself to be forcing them out of their normal use in supposing them to mean anything else. The spiritual body of which the Apostle speaks might very well mean to him only a body of flesh and bones, somehow sanctified and made immune against pain, age, and death. It is quite as true, however, that to-day, among intelligent people, the natural sense of the Apostle's words and the Creed's echo of them seem to be different. We do not care to deny that the clause is patient of the Lutterworth parishioner's interpretation, but we should say that it required a large exercise of its patience. A better Biblical exegesis and a larger acquaintance with the physical frame-

work of the universe make a different interpretation of the words seem to be the natural and reasonable one; and this fact, so far from invalidating the clause or proving its unworthiness to find place in a great symbol of Christian faith, adds rather to its significance.

It is right that the creed of a spiritual faith should be thus elastic and patient of such variation in the meaning of its terms as increased revelation demands; because a creed is not an exact and ultimate definition of knowledge. It is an endeavor to voice experience, past, present, and to come. It is a statement of a hope, or an hypothesis, or a conviction, which makes such appeal to the minds, hearts, and wills of those who confess it as to induce them to accept it as the norm of life, and to attempt its translation into terms of conduct. It is by no juggling with words that the man of the Middle Ages and the man of the twentieth century are enabled to confess their faith in a future life in the same terms. Both use the word "body." Both express the same inexpugnable faith in some conscious and efficient life beyond death. The difference in the interpretation of the words which they employ

to utter their religious conviction is no whit greater than the difference which would exist in their interpretation of the same word "body" when used in its ordinary physical sense, in view of the progress which the centuries have brought us in anatomy and physiology.

It is into the expectation of such change in Christian symbols as this that the true Dynamic of Christianity introduces us. It makes us at home in the present theological and religious terminology, assuring us that it is but an instrument of expression to be used, added to, filled fuller of meaning, as under the guidance of the resident divine Force in us Christian experience expands. One secret of the influence of the Ritschlian school in Germany lies in their recognition of this fact. Instead of attempting to treat all theological symbols as exercises in technical definition, they have endeavored to see beneath the form of them the vital experience which they attempt to portray; and in their preaching and teaching they have striven to reinterpret its value to the world. This is at once the rational and the spiritual method. In the process of it some phrases and symbols are

doomed to pass away altogether. They are those which are merely formal; husks, which never held a kernel or a germ. Such symbols, creeds, and institutions as have expressed experience are likely to abide. Some will be kept because of their historical significance; but more because they still speak to the heart; and when their terms are reinterpreted in the light of later revelation, they prove their power to utter the deep things of the Spirit.

This same freedom to live in the present and to adapt Christian activity to its needs is conferred upon the Church. Comparatively young men can remember when churches of different orders made much of the apostolic sanction upon their respective forms of organization and government. Congregationalists sought to prove the autonomy of the individual congregation. Presbyterians were instant in their claims that the early Church knew, loved, and used the elder and the presbyter. Episcopalians cherished the apostolic succession of their bishops. While Baptists claimed the distinction of observing one of the sacraments as they believed the early Church observed it. All appealed to the New Testament and more or less to the Fathers. All — with

the possible exception of the Episcopalians, who had perhaps the best case, but spoiled it by claiming too much — succeeded in substantiating a considerable part of their claims. Yet in the light of Christ's teaching concerning the Spirit all are ruled out of court, not because the question of Church organization is unimportant, but because the first century does not claim jurisdiction in the matter. Granting the Congregationalist's claim to autonomy, as proven in the practice of the early Church, he is still at liberty to ordain a bishop and an archbishop if, in the clearest light which the Spirit sheds upon past experience and present circumstance, bishops and archbishops seem best adapted to advance the Kingdom of God. The Baptist may go on immersing *usque ad Tubam*, if he please, but if he be a true disciple, his practice ought to base itself upon present expediency and adaptation to the will of God and the need of men to-day, rather than upon mere conformity to the first century's fashion. The Episcopalian will do well to cherish and reverence his bishops just so far as they serve the Spirit's need and help the Kingdom's advance. He will lay as little stress upon the form of apos-

tolic succession as may be, for while the fact would have a certain historical significance if it could be proven, it would carry no ultimate authority. Appeal would still lie to the divine Presence in the Church as foretold by Jesus, but so often forgotten by His disciples.

3. This Dynamic of Christianity delivers us equally from the fear and the pride of Reason by exalting it into its true place as a chief agent and instrument of the divine Spirit in man. I doubt not that some orthodox reader of this chapter, if any have been patient and venturesome enough to go so far with me, will lay the book down in disgust with the sweeping verdict that it is nothing but a plea for rationalism. On the contrary, it aims to set forth a very sure defense and refuge from that barren rationalism which sometimes tries to identify itself with Christianity, and sometimes is its open or secret foe. English Deism in the eighteenth century was essentially rationalistic. New England Calvinism passed through stages of experience when it was scarcely less so; and fundamentally, indeed, Calvinism is a rationalistic scheme. Unitarianism of the higher and dryer type has found its effectiveness hampered by the same

blight; while German rationalism was long a name wherewith to conjure an evil spell both in England and America — not without some justification.

With the theory of rationalism the Christian need have no quarrel for reasons to be set forth in the concluding chapter upon the Harmonies of Revelation. Toward its most common practices, however, he is right in maintaining a pretty consistently hostile attitude; because with few exceptions, rationalism has found its main employment in criticism. It has often gone so far as to turn the office of Reason completely upside down, giving to the criticism of notions the chief place which should be reserved for the interpretation of experience. By a fine instinct the mass of plain, every-day thinkers are sure to discover and to revolt against this treatment. The typical rationalist is like a too anxious parent, who, for fear his child should incur risk of infection or over-exertion, feeds him on a meagre diet of sterilized food and distilled water, while laying an embargo on sun, air, and exercise. Unconsciously he exalts the bacillus or microbe into a god, and becomes its prophet, proclaiming his devil-worship far

and wide; his boy meanwhile growing anæmic and rickety under this negative regime, unless he have natural strength enough to revolt against it and burst its shackles; in which case he is likely to go to the other extreme and become intolerant of ordinary hygienic precautions. So the rationalist is forever probing the natural food upon which men have stayed their spiritual hunger for the germs of superstition, and urging his fellows to abstain from religious work and worship until the validity of all they do has been submitted to a court of inquiry. The only gospel in which he really believes is a writ of *quo warranto*. He exerts his influence, and, let it be added, almost always serves his day, though in a very partial and negative fashion. None the less, his day must be a short one, simply because man craves generous sustenance for life, and looks to find it in the kindly fruits of the Spirit, while all the rationalist has to offer is the sterilized product of his syllogistic machine. Men trust their common sense and the guidance of ordinary experience to purge their faith of casual and incidental error, very much as they trust their digestive organs to reject and excrete such elements in

their generally wholesome food as are ill adapted for assimilation. The man who would refuse to entertain or act upon a religious faith until he was absolutely sure that it had been cleansed of every element of error, would be as unwise as he who should refuse to eat until convinced that every ingredient of his food could be at once taken up by the body and transformed into tissue.

Against such folly the voice of the divine Resident in human life has always protested. Human Reason is one aspect of that image of the divine in man which testifies to his sonship. It is a bond of union between God and man. It is the means whereby man interprets experience and makes revelation intelligible. The mind and the heart are twin apostles. Like Paul and Apollos, one plants and the other waters, but God gives the increase of knowledge and love. The growth in experience toward which the offices of both tend, and to which they are practically indispensable, comes from Him. Neither is an infallible agent. Each is set to test the other's work. Each is a servant of the Spirit; or to speak more exactly, the activity of Reason is but a form or aspect of the activity of

the resident divine Force, struggling for reunion with its source. It is fallible, because the human conditions which the Spirit respects, and the human speech which He consents to use, and the human will whose autonomy He guards as a sacred thing, are all inadequate and partial when measured by the task which is set them. Hence it comes to pass that the modern sin against the Holy Ghost is likely to take two apparently contradictory forms. He is in danger of committing it who contemns Reason as though it were in some sense hostile to Revelation, distrusting its verdicts and banishing it from the temple as though at its best estate it could approach only so far as some court of the Gentiles. On the other hand, he is in equal danger who, interpreting Reason to be a sort of logic-chopping faculty, yet sets the servant above his lord, by making its dogmas supreme and bounding all human experience by the limits of its sway. Life may be maintained for considerable periods within a stockade of syllogisms, but it can never be adequately nurtured there. Under such conditions it is likely to be dwarfed on one side and abnormally developed on the other. The

refusal to test the results of the dialectical faculty's activity by Christian experience is as narrow and subversive of sound scientific doctrine as the refusal to test other revelations by the verdict of the Reason. The man who recognizes the Force resident in human life, and speaking through the human Reason, as one with the Power which reveals Himself to the conscience and the heart, founds the house of his faith upon the rock, where no flood of seeming contradiction is ever likely to rob him of his freedom or his peace.

4. It follows from what has just been said that such a doctrine of the Dynamic of Christianity must rid us of all fear of the results of historical or philosophical criticism; nor can the believer in it well be confounded by any new discovery in any field of science. This fear has always been unworthy, but never quite unnatural. The man whose faith is comprehended and defined by the limits of a system must needs look with apprehension upon all criticism of it, and especially upon any discovery which may threaten to develop facts incompatible with its integrity. But the man who is living a life wherein a divine

Force is resident sees in every new result of criticism simply a summons to partial rearrangement of the material of experience, and in every new discovery simply a new and welcome opportunity. The progress of science, physical, historical, critical, delights and animates him. It is a challenge to his love of adventure. Even when it has happened — as was the case during the latter half of the nineteenth century — that the material wrought out by investigators and discoverers was so great as far to exceed his power to coördinate it, he suffers from no fear, but simply as one embarrassed by the multitude of rather crude riches. He realizes, if he be a man of genuine spiritual insight, that he is living in a season of luxuriant growth, and that a period of development and maturity is bound to follow it. So far from being fearful of the outcome, the soul that feels the Dynamic of Religion will experience the exhilaration of the pioneer looking out upon a newly discovered region, which must be explored, mapped, and subdued to the use and residence of men.

Face to face with the recent scientific advance, and the necessity of answering the

soul's questions about it, men may very well have been smitten into silence for a time. None but the man of little faith, however, is described in Matthew Arnold's lines : —

> "The kings of modern thought are dumb ;
> Silent they are, though not content,
> And wait to see the future come.
> They have the grief men had of yore,
> But they contend and cry no more."

The silence of the man of positive faith in the Soul of the Universe is of the nobler type of Keats : —

> "Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific, and all his men
> Look'd at each other with a wild surmise
> Silent upon a Peak in Darien."

5. This Dynamic of Christianity confers the freedom of faith upon every man who faces toward truth and travels sturdily in its direction. Here again it ministers to the possession of that peace which Christ bequeathed to His disciples. A more adequate discussion of this corollary of Christ's teaching concerning the Spirit in the world must be referred to the concluding chapter. Let it suffice here to say that this is by no means

to baptize a cheap and trivial doctrine of universalism or eclecticism into the name of Christ. It is rather to remember the deeper significance of Jesus' own attitude toward truth. All truth was sacred. It was always and everywhere "of God" rather than "of the world." The man who sought it with the purpose of honestly applying it to life was of the class who bring forth fruits meet for repentance. He could not deliberately face toward the truth in any department of human experience without being "led by the Spirit," since to induce men to take that attitude is one of the chief offices of God resident in His world; and the man who is led by the Spirit is born of God and knoweth God.

XI

THE NEW MEANING OF SOME OLD WORDS

In the midst of the Peelite troubles of 1852, when a change of party names was gravely discussed by British politicians in the hope of mollifying opponents, confirming waverers, and possibly winning recruits, Sir James Graham reminded his colleagues of Paley's maxim, "that men often change their creed, but not so often the name of their sect."[1] It is natural and on the whole commendable that men should cling to significant terms both in politics and in religion. There is little enough that is sacred in a word; but as the word passes into history it begins to connote experience — and experience is always sacred. Hence it comes to pass that language almost insensibly changes its significance with the march of human progress. A word may be said to have two aspects. It appears in one light to the man who sees in it a sign of his

[1] Morley, *Life of W. E. Gladstone*, i. 422.

experience; it may look very different to his fellow who regards it as the symbol of a scientific idea. Take for example the word "sunrise." From time immemorial men have known by trial what "sunrise" is. They have looked with longing for it through slow night-watches; they have built their plans upon the unfailing certainty of its appearance; more or less dimly they have felt its beauty and responded to its exhilaration. From the days when the Psalmist thanked God for the joyous outgoings of morning and of evening, they have paid unconscious tribute to the principle of the Continuity of Nature whenever they have used the phrase. Measured in terms of common experience, the content of the word has been practically a constant quantity.

On the other hand, when wise men — however crude their wisdom — have undertaken to account for the phenomenon and to frame its definition, the story of the word has been one of perpetual change. In the light of modern knowledge ancient theory finds no standing-ground. So completely does the planetary hypothesis of to-day differ from the Aurora myth, that the two may be said to have nothing in common. Yet the plain man feels

no embarrassment in using his ancestor's phrase. So much of the word's signification as lies in the plane of experience defies the tooth of time. To the man who would walk or work in the light, "sunrise" means just what it meant to the pilgrim or the laborer of a thousand years ago.

This is not at all to deny the practical significance of our progress in ideas. It would be easy to gather a group of men with cameras and spectroscopes and sextants who should be living witnesses to the fact that the sun's appearance has a meaning in the realm of practical experience to-day which is vastly wider than of old time. None the less, "sunrise" remains as legitimate a term as ever. Such change as has passed upon it has simply made it richer and more significant. It was born of a mistaken notion that the sun climbed the arch of heaven on man's behalf. It continues with perfect propriety to serve the need of a day when man knows that the revolution of an insignificant planet is whirling him — an insignificant speck upon it — out of shadow into light.

As was intimated in the last chapter, religion must take ungrudging account of this

fact. Men reproduce experience generation after generation. Though the reproduction be not exact, it is still real, with reference to the things that are fundamental. Each generation, however, meets life upon a larger field than its predecessors knew, and therefore adds something of its own to the heritage bequeathed to it. It is further true that vast changes take place in the scientific treatment of experience. As men ponder upon the phenomena of it in their endeavor to discover its causes and to coördinate its results into systems, the hypotheses advanced to account for experience must differ, and differ very widely. Men will change their theories more readily than their terms. They cling to terms because these represent recurring experiences; they change their theories because investigation into unexplored quarters of their widening field of experience presents new facts and compels scientific rearrangement of old ones.

The definition of religious terms may be said to be always a theological exercise. If it is to be undertaken in a genuinely scientific spirit, the facts just set forth must never be forgotten. Terms are likely to persist because they are the symbols of persisting experience.

Definitions are bound to change as time multiplies and tests the theories advanced to account for experience. Hence it follows that definitions have permanent value for what they include rather than for what they exclude. They must be framed with the expectation of an increase of content. They must be regarded as marking stages in a process of development. Every definition meant to represent the content of great and vital realities must be provisional. On the other hand, no statement of faith which has moulded and formed the thought and conduct of men through any considerable period is to be treated as void of truth. It will almost invariably yield suggestion to the reverent student. Reverence for human experience, be that experience never so blind and partial, is a prime requisite to its interpretation. There is something in it which will always escape the inquisition of merely indifferent curiosity, as surely as it will be warped and refracted by passing through the medium of uncritical and unctuous sentiment. The verdict upon the Unitarians,[1] that they have often succeeded in

[1] The reader will remember that the word used by Dr. Fairbairn is not "Unitarian" but "Socinian."

criticism because they failed in insight, has application here. There is need of that fine combination of qualities summed up in the Scripture phrase "an understanding heart," if religious experience is to be rightly interpreted or religious terms intelligibly defined.

1. There was a time when men seemed satisfied to rest in a definition of God that simply deified some process in nature which passed their comprehension and of which they found themselves the object. They were involved in the process, and they worshiped the chief apparent factor in it. The recurrence of the day and the march of the seasons represented such a process. Men naturally worshiped the sun, therefore, and built up their sun myths about it. They went on to personify their objects of worship, because of an ineradicable instinct which ascribes all processes to an ultimate cause possessing the characteristics of mind and will. Thus the worship of a multitude of demiurges grew up. At last the notion of monolatry or henotheism, the worship of one God, to whom it behooved a people to be true through good report and ill, was wrought out in the experience of the Hebrews, and was developed into a real monotheism by

the inspired genius of the prophets. The idea of God connoted practically illimitable force. The experience of men, however, demanded more than this to render their notion of the universe rational. So the idea was advanced to include the attributes of reason and love. The great revelation made by Jesus, into the depths of which we have yet made but partial way, was that the idea of God can be properly expressed in terms of human experience; but that human experience can never compass it in such a degree as to deny it further growth and development.

In the light of Jesus' teaching, there is no need to shrink from the use of anthropomorphic terms in the attempt to express our idea of God. The true definition must be big enough to include them, since intelligible terms must reflect real human experience. The trend of Christian thought has naturally been toward a notion of God as the ground of all experience; the source of all thought, will, and feeling; resident in His universe, and yet transcending it; working in and through man as the most highly developed agent that life has revealed. God is the term men use for the Fountain of Creative Force, for

the Source of Authority, and for the personal object of supreme affection. It will be objected that such an attempt at definition lacks the fundamental note of a definition in so far as it fails to delimit the idea, and to mark bounds beyond which its content may not pass. To which the only answer to be made is that attempts to define a person always have to reckon with the fact that personality refuses such delimitation. There are deeps in it which pass our finding out unto perfection. The definition which deals with a person must always have room in it for growth. God, to the Christian, has ceased to be a mere object, and become an experience.[1]

It will be further objected in some quarters that such an approach to the true idea of God must take undue account of, and accord undue importance to, the ethnic religions. But it is well-nigh impossible to take undue account of the ethnic religions. Enormous importance attaches to them. Not one among them which embodies the genuine experience, or has called forth the devoted service of men, is ever to be contemned or treated as though

[1] Professor Seth, quoted by Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 339.

it had no significance to the Christian. They all testify to the truth that we are "incurably religious," and they challenge the Christian to a comparison of experience. The Christian need not shrink from the contest. He is doing no least despite to the claims of Christ in frankly admitting that the faith which fits life best, by meeting its daily need most directly, by uttering its dicta to the reason and the will with the greatest and most authoritative cogency, by offering to the adventurous soul of man the largest field of spiritual exercise, is the faith which must endure.

2. When we come to question the Christian as to the experience of God which his religion has provided, we find three great correspondences existing between his faith and his life. They may be rudely indicated by the following formula: —

> Man in the Making connotes the Father.
> Man in the Marring connotes Christ.
> Man in the Remaking connotes the Spirit.

The doctrine of the Trinity has survived and is vital to-day because it expresses experience. Any attempt at a definition of it must be made in terms of life. Man as a rational being, conscious of himself as the subject of

birth and growth, and observant of creation as in process about him, is driven to a belief in the existence of a Creative Force. The more scientific man becomes, in his observation of the facts of creation, and the more systematic his arrangement of knowledge, the more inevitably is he driven to the conclusion that this Creative Force is rational and essentially personal, in our ordinary understanding of that word.

Quite as fundamental and general an experience as that of the awakening of man's scientific curiosity about the Whence and the How of the world in which he finds himself is his query concerning the Why and the Whither of it, and himself in it. Here comes in the experience of the marring of his peace. He becomes conscious of himself in a new sense. He knows himself now to be a person in the sense in which Dorner loved to define personality, "the ego as self-conscious spirit moving toward the fulfillment of its existence." With this new and higher realization of self, trouble always comes. It never ministers to peace at first. That question of fulfillment of destiny is always puzzling, and sometimes saddening. The destiny itself is a mystery, and

the way toward its fulfillment seems strewn thick with obstacles. The man no sooner becomes conscious of himself than he knows his existence by himself to be partial, fragmentary, difficult. His place in the world is not commodious enough for his soul. If he fit himself to it, and cut all his thoughts and deeds by the measure of a possible threescore years and ten, he knows he is dwarfing self and somehow missing his chance. To use once more the hard-worked cant phrase, he is out of harmony with his environment. In theological language, he is under conviction of sin. His life seems marred, and nothing can restore its peace except coördination with the general scheme of things which he knows as the universe, and with the Power which underlies and works through it.

In Christ, this Power seems to make a new revelation to him. In Christ, God advances toward him with overtures of peace — with promise of at-one-ment. It is easy to state this dogmatically; but as a dogma it can exert no compulsion on the wills and lives of men. The essence of the revelation appears in the light of Christian experience. With a singular unanimity men who have tried Christ's

Way of faith, hope, and love have found themselves at one with God and His world. I do not forget that they have often felt and taught that the world was at enmity with God. That, however, was the world of the imperfect, the petty, and the partial, which is ever arrogating to itself the place of the whole. In the larger sense, Christ has brought them peace and power as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven — that is, as men upon whom the freedom of the universe has been conferred.

It is in this process of rebirth into the larger world — of endowment with a genuine adequacy to circumstance, that man comes into immediate consciousness of God as a Spirit, pervading the universe, immanent in the world, and speaking immediately to the soul of the man himself. Through God, thus revealed as Spirit, revelation becomes an immediate and continuous experience. The so-called revelation of the past — the word of the Prophet, the burden of the Book, the dogma of the Church — all has significance. Yet this is not real, ultimate, essential revelation. It is rather the vehicle or channel of it. It is that through which the real revelation flows, or if one please to change the figure, it is the body

of which the real revelation is born when quickened by the Spirit's influence. The essence of the revelation is always delivered in the divine Spirit's voice to the human spirit's ear. The two are of one nature, and each can understand the other.

3. It is at this point that we find ourselves face to face with the necessity of defining sin. This must be done with a full recognition of the fact that evil is a mystery not yet to be compassed and made plain in terms of human experience. The mystery does not, however, put us to any permanent confusion. It does not compel us to any admission of dualism in our thought of God. For much that is reckoned to be evil we can find a rational place in the universe upon the plane of our present knowledge. It would be presumptuous to say that we can find room and place for all. The problem of evil challenges us to further adventure in the realm of thought. Sin, as it appears in human life, is specifically and definitely known. Like all spiritual experiences, it transcends the limits of a snug and handy definition; but its fundamental characteristics may be pointed out.

Sin is the permission of disorder in the life

of the spiritual man. It might be said to be the state or condition in which a man finds himself when the dawn of self-consciousness opens the eyes of his soul. He knows himself to be an individual, and therefore partial in himself. His powers are bound to prove inadequate to circumstance unless he find place for his partial life in the system of the whole. The question as to whether he will do this, or choose to remain in his anarchic individualism, is the question whether he will live in sin or turn out of and away from it. To become conscious of his own partial and insufficient life is to be convicted of sin. The old phrase is marvelously expressive, and remains apt to our modern use unless we insist upon making it express an artificial sense of guilt. A clear sense of guilt may or may not appear in a man's conviction of sin. The divine Force resident among men rarely fails to bring home to the individual man the obligation which rests upon him to coördinate the work of his reason, his will, and his heart. To see the thing that is true by the light of his reason, to choose it as the thing to be done, and to love it as a thing to be cherished, is to yield life to the Spirit's guidance. This is to coör-

dinate the different activities in such a degree as will permit life's orderly development under the influence of its divine resident forces. It puts a man's body and physical powers into right relations with the physical frame of the universe, and his soul into harmony with the creative and sustaining Power which animates the universe. The man then becomes himself a power for universal order and efficiency.

If, on the other hand, he willfully or carelessly fail in this, he becomes an element of disorder looking toward anarchy. In so far as he uses his will to choose what his reason refuses, or uses his reason narrowly and in such domineering fashion as to rule all testimony of his heart out of court as irrelevant, he is refusing to have a partial life made whole; he is choosing a life of sin, and committing definite acts of sin. Sin is therefore fundamentally a failure to institute and maintain a correspondence between revelation and life, — between the truth that is known and the thing that is done.

We have seen that to become convinced of the partial and unworthy nature of the life lived as though its individual existence for a few mortal years were all, is to be convicted

of sin. If this realization develop after years of careless or willful living, in which opportunities have been evidently wasted, the sense of guilt often accompanies it, sometimes appearing in almost overwhelming and heart-breaking measure. If, however, the life have been upon the whole well trained and well ordered, the sense of guilt is scarcely to be expected. But whether it appear or not, the conviction of sin is an experience which in its essence must have been known to all generations of men who have reached the stage of a well-developed self-consciousness. The vital question in it is, whether it will lead a man to the search for, and the acceptance of, a rational religion. Will this utterance of the Spirit's voice, telling him who he is and what he needs, be met by a resolve on his part to seek for peace in an ampler revelation?

4. The etymology of the word "religion" has been in doubt from the days of Cicero. He thought of it as possessing fundamental relation to the idea of conscientious performance. The religious man was the man who gave attention to the demands of the gods, going over the ground of his duty to them again and again, as diligent children might con a

lesson. The Fathers, including Augustine, derived the word from a root meaning "to bind," and emphasized the idea of obligation. Probably they were right so far as the literal sense of the root-word goes. There is a question whether they were right in deriving from it the obligation idea upon which they put such emphasis; but whether they were right or not, the student of to-day, in view of human experience in the light of Christian revelation, would make a different application of this root idea. He inclines to regard religion as the principle which binds the elements of life together in such a way as to give them coherence and wholeness. It is the bond of union with God. It is no less the bond of life's own unity. Under the influence of religion the *disjecta membra* of experience are coördinated and made efficient. Its office may be rudely compared to that of the tire, which binds the helpless conglomerate of hub, spokes, and felloe into the efficient entity of the wheel; or of the hoops, which hold the individual staves together that the pail or cask may have content. A far more significant figure is to be derived, however, from the vision of Ezekiel, where the

word or breath of the Spirit comes upon the heaps of dry and separated bones. At once they are articulated, bone to his bone; the skeletons thus bound together are clothed upon with flesh; the principle of self-directing life is breathed into each man's frame; and the men themselves under its influence stand up, no mere mass of unrelated individuals, but an exceeding great army. Pure religion and undefiled is, therefore, that bond of perfectness and peace which binds a man's life into coherence and efficiency in spite of all the disintegrating influences of selfishness. It joins men together in well-ordered societies, and binds all to God in a true unity of the Spirit.[1]

5. It is in the light of such a definition of religion that the significance of salvation appears. Men have questioned sometimes whether there were any place or need for salvation in a system of thought which represented God as immanent in the world and in man, and which identified the so-called "forces of nature" with His immediate resident influences. In point of fact, there is the largest possible place and need for salvation.

[1] Ephesians iv. 3; Colossians iii. 14.

It is not so much a salvation from a future as from a present hell. Indeed, it is not so much a salvation *from* a fate, as *to* an opportunity. Yet the one implies the other, and the old-time preaching of hell was in no sense irrational or needless; though it was too often ill-proportioned. There is significance in the fact that when Jesus is represented in the Gospels as performing miracles of healing, the verb σώζω is repeatedly used. In the King James Version it is sometimes translated "to make whole," as when the woman in the crowd says to herself, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole" (Mark v. 28). Again, after a work of healing has been accomplished, it is translated "to save;" "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke viii. 50). "To save" is of course its literal translation, but the salvation which it portrays in these instances is the making whole of an incomplete or partially disintegrated body, and the restoration of normal function. Christian salvation is strictly analogous. It is the restoration of the maimed life, and the completion of the partial life in such measure that the functions of faith, hope, and love shall become normal. In the life of

the saved man the obduracy of the material with which the resident Spirit must needs work out His plans of peace and unity ceases. The man becomes tractable and docile to the Spirit's influence.

6. In an earlier paragraph the statement was made that no article of a creed which has seemed so great and vital as to enter deeply into Christian experience would ever prove to be without significance. Emphasis may pass from it; it may sink into relative oblivion; but it is not likely to be completely superseded. The question may properly be asked whether this contention can be sustained with reference to the Atonement. It is long since the doctrine of vicarious atonement has stood in the forefront of Christian teaching. Some men deny it. Others neglect it as though it were half obsolete. Is there place for it in the thought of a man who believes the Dynamic of Christianity to be God as a resident Force in His world and in the life of man? I should unhesitatingly answer, Yes. Yet here again it must be understood that atonement is to be regarded as an experience and not as a dogma. It is not a single act of Christ, done once and forever upon the Cross, and to be

exactly defined in forensic terms. It certainly cannot be represented by any crass notion of so much suffering credited against a debt of so much sin. That sort of commercialism may well be as abhorrent to the Christian as ever the money-changers' tables in the Temple were to his Master.

Still, the fact remains that if we try to estimate our immediate knowledge and experience of God in terms of the divine Spirit resident in man, we find atonement to be His most apparent aim and purpose. In the definition of religion, the fact was just emphasized that if it meant anything, it meant a principle of integration and harmony, — of vital and natural union between the various activities and powers of a man, between each individual man and his neighbor, and between all men and God. This is practical and real atonement in its most literal sense. Christ's mission was to accomplish this. The method was, in the most literal and natural sense, vicarious. He lived and died for men. He spent Himself in their behalf. He shed His blood in sacrifice, but this was simply a rational consummation of the course of life-giving which had marked the whole ministry. It was not an act essen-

tially different from a hundred other acts of sacrifice and love. When He felt that virtue had gone out of Him to the shrinking and fearful woman in the crowd, the experience was essentially one with the experience on Calvary. The latter was a supreme manifestation of the same sacrificial love which the former evidenced in its proper degree. It gave to the declaration of divine love the greatest emphasis of which human terms are capable. It is a belittling of Christ's sacrifice to say that this atoning work was comprised in a single act or experience of the Son of Mary upon Calvary. The Sacrifice and the Atonement must be coeval with man's partial and separate existence upon the earth. None can say when it began or when it shall end. The experience of the man, Christ Jesus, was the great pivotal chapter in it. His assurance that the work of the ages was to be His own work carried on by the Spirit was a prophecy that atonement was to be continuous. Experience has shown that atonement is most efficacious when it is vicarious. It is not irreverent to claim that wherever a man bears hardness for the sake of his fellow, the work of vicarious atonement appears in process. It

is not enough to say that this is simply a gracious echo or reflection of Christ's work. It is His work *in esse*, as carried on by the resident Spirit in the world. When Mazzini said that there was one appeal to men which he found never failed to win a response, — the appeal "Come and suffer," — he bore testimony to the fact that this Spirit does not disdain residence in some men who are far from thinking of themselves as Christians. Wherever He abides as a ruling principle of life, something of the work of atonement goes forward, and usually by vicarious method.

7. It is this fact that gives us a basis for a definition of the Church. *Ubi Spiritus, ibi ecclesia.* The question might fairly be asked whether, since this little book is based upon a belief in the presence of the Spirit in all nature, and in all men, the Church were not already universal. To which it must be answered, — Yes, the Church is thus universal *in posse;* but the Church appears *in esse* wherever the Spirit's presence is owned and admitted to be regnant in the thought and conduct of men in such degree that the natural fruits of the Spirit appear. Wherever in any man's life "love, joy, peace, long-suffer-

ing, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" appear, these fruits of the Spirit afford unanswerable proof of His regnant presence. These are the true insignia of church-membership.

It is so evident as scarcely to need formal statement, that where men are so effectually under the Spirit's guidance as to give this evidence of His possession of their lives, they will naturally associate themselves in local bodies for work and worship. Their individual preferences with respect to forms of worship, modes of church-government, or the relative emphasis to be placed upon minor points of doctrine, will necessitate greater or less variety in the constitution and management of these local bodies. This variety may sometimes become bewildering; it may often appear, and sometimes prove to be, selfish, and therefore disorganizing. Yet so long as it be held subject to the cultivation of the fruits of the Spirit, there is no real schism. "To bite and devour one another" is to render the structure of the local church obdurate to the Spirit's influence, and to invite schism; but the presence of Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Quaker organizations in the same com-

munity is in itself no more proof of schism in the body spiritual, than the presence of clergymen, physicians, and merchants living side by side is of schism in the body politic.

It would be possible thus to proceed through the whole lexicon of theological and religious terms, testing their received content by the touch of human experience as guided by the resident Spirit. We may be sure that all which have ever appealed to men's hearts, and exerted a controlling influence upon their lives, would prove to have significance, however obsolete they may seem to be. Such a task is beyond the scope of our present adventure; and this chapter must close with a brief reference to the new position of the Bible and the doctrine of its inspiration.

8. Here, as so often elsewhere, we need to remind ourselves again that the new view is likely to prove but an old doctrine awakened out of sleep. The notion of the literal infallibility of Scripture is no true Reformation teaching. It represents rather the crust which formed upon the Reformation experience when men undertook to crowd that experience into a snug and well-defined system.

In their protest against the authority of the

Church, the later Reformers found it convenient to set up the *ipse dixit* of the Bible. Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli had gone too deep into the real Reformation experience ever to give consistent assent to this new doctrine; but to their successors it seemed to be the easiest and most direct way of thoroughly systematizing the new thought. They forgot, if they ever knew, that as soon as thought becomes thoroughly, that is to say, completely systematized, it falls into a dogmatic slumber in which men count it dead. In propounding the doctrine of Biblical infallibility, its sponsors did the immediately easy thing, forgetting that the truth, while it always proves ultimately practicable, is by no means always immediately easy. It loves to laugh at our confident attempts to cram experience into a little system, and it is sometimes shockingly contemptuous of our small consistencies. For instance, the average man upon the street will say that the shortest distance between two points upon the earth which lie exactly east and west from each other is to be measured upon the "straight" east-and-west line. He treats it as a self-evident proposition, and inclines to laugh at any other claim; but

the navigator, knowing that this is never the shortest distance except upon the equator, sails forth upon his great circle arc with a confidence which puts his uninstructed friend to shame. The bane of science has always been the number of thinkers who have insisted upon sailing on small circles because small circles can be completed, while the great circles of experience, the arcs of which represent our most direct paths to ultimate realities, are never quite closed.

The Bible is not so much a supernatural and infallible code of Christian verities,[1] as a witness to man's experience of God. We need have no hesitation in claiming for it the place of a unique witness, because historically it has held a singular and unique place in human life. By the same token we are assured of its "inspiration," and that in unique degree.

The religious experience which the Bible sets forth is of the highest order. The story of it is of the highest significance, and therefore of the highest authority. But the authority consists in the aptness of this experience to every man's need. The inspiration con-

[1] Sabatier's *Religions of Authority*, p. 165.

sists in the voice which speaks through the Bible story to our hearts. When those hearts are not too heavy with failure over fruitless attempts to reconcile impossible theories of Scripture, they own the Spirit's voice in it as sheep own the voice of the shepherd. In the utterance of this intimate and appealing message, the divine Force resident in human life uses imperfect means as readily and generously as He uses imperfect men in advancing the cause of truth and of right today. He speaks through Bible history, but nowhere vouches for its infallibility. He uses the voice of Hebrew poetry, and the man who cannot discern the note of inspiration in the Psalms may well conclude that there are no chords in his soul upon which any breath of the Spirit can ever take effect. Just as impartially, and with the same divine humility, the Spirit avails Himself of the traditions, legends, and perhaps the myths[1] of a highly endowed people to interpret His message to their hearts.

There need be no hesitation in admitting

[1] I confess to a great skepticism about the presence of the mythical. Tradition and legend abound; but the mythical seems antipathetic to the Hebrew genius.

this to be quite as true of the New Testament as of the Old. The resident Force working out His plan of religious development in the life of the race disdains no ordinary human methods of accomplishment. He loves the *normal* as Jesus Himself, with His refusal to grant signs and wonders to a sensation-seeking crowd, always seemed to do. The supra-normal appears from time to time, as it always appears in every epoch-making life. A great life is always a channel for the introduction of strange experience, which the majority of the men of the time treat with skepticism. It was to be expected that the greatest life would prove to be the channel for the most striking and startling revelation. The whole question of Miracle must be relegated to the concluding chapter. Yet it is, however, too late in the day to deny miracles; just as it is quite too late to think of them as contraventions of the order of the universe. The greatest miracle is Christ's life and death, and the outflowing of influence into our experience from them. Let us admit, and gladly, that the history of the first century has come down to us as other histories have come; that tradition has played its

part, and that legend has here and there brought its accretion. Criticism of the sane and generous sort ought to be invited, rather than shunned. It is hard to see what destructive work it can do, except to the structure of those who build their faith upon a foundation of mechanical inspiration, instead of upon the presence of God which, in greater or less degree, every age has experienced. The first century felt it in a unique measure, as it seemed to be interpreted into its life in the Person of Christ. The New Testament is the attempt, and a most highly authoritative attempt, to preserve that experience in a form which shall make it applicable to the life of every generation. Yet every century interprets and applies the meaning of the New Testament story in the light of an experience longer and richer by one hundred years than that of its predecessor; but no century has succeeded in reading any vital factor out of the Gospels and Epistles.

9. Just now the Gospels of the Infancy with the story of the Virgin Birth are bearing the brunt of a new inquiry among so-called orthodox Christians. Let us admit for the moment, and solely for the sake of argument, that the

tradition incorporated in the early chapters of Matthew and Luke proves to be legendary in its character. Is it, therefore, to be regarded as outside the pale of significant Scripture, and preserved to the canon only upon sufferance as a sort of historical curiosity? And shall we, to be consistent, cut out the words "conceived by the Holy Ghost" from the Apostles' Creed? I cannot think so; because centuries of experience have proven practically beyond cavil the truth of the Creed's declaration. The real central asseveration of the Creed is that Jesus Christ was in the article of birth as truly as in the article of death an incarnation of divine life and love. He came upon a unique errand. He was to fulfill a unique destiny. The real significance of the doctrine to the Church and the world, and the ultimate meaning of the words of the Creed, is simply an echo of the angel's word to Mary, — "The Power of the Most High shall overshadow thee." The mere physical circumstances of incarnation are so absolutely irrelevant as to make inquiry into them as unseemly in this case as in the case of any other great life. If the phrase in the Creed were to go, the experi-

ence of the Christian world would demand the substitution of another. Even admitting the Gospel of the Infancy to be mere legend, it is hard to see what phrase could be substituted for "conceived by the Holy Ghost," which would so exactly express the conclusion thrust upon a man who believes in an orderly universe, the life of which develops, and the history of which unfolds, under the impulse of a resident personal Force.

Although extended reference to the greatly vexed question of the Ultimate Source of Authority must be left to the next chapter, the trend of this will indicate the direction in which the writer looks for its practical answer. It is not to a book, or to a church, or to a creed. It is not even to history in the common acceptance of that word; that is, it is not to a mere *précis* or brief of human experience. It is rather to the voice of the creative Power, immanent in the world, speaking the language of the soul in terms of conscience and reason. Since, however, the language of the soul is an imperfect tongue, and the individual soul's life is sure to be inadequate for the utterance of the whole

truth, and too often obdurate to its translation into goodness, other authorities have their place and weight. Chief among these stand the common conscience of believing people, the consensus of opinion among right-minded men, the history of human experience, and in particular the unique expression of it found in Sacred Scripture, culminating as it does in the life of Jesus Christ. He expressed this truth of God's residence in the world as it had never been expressed before. He told His disciples that it was the Gospel for the future. There are signs that the world is at last opening its eyes to the significance of His word.

XII

THE NEW HARMONIES OF REVELATION

It seems a far cry now to the day when so mild a heresy as that of "Essays and Reviews" could shatter the peace of ecclesiastical dovecots. In point of fact, however, but two-score years have passed since the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council reversed the judgment against Rowland Williams and H. B. Wilson for their part in that rash enterprise. This was on February 8, 1864. On February 14, John Richard Green, the historian, wrote to his friend Boyd Dawkins that there seemed now nothing remaining in the formularies of the Church of England to restrain freedom of thought. He fancied that there would be an almost universal feeling of dismay at the notion of a church attempting to teach without authoritative and definite standards of doctrine, and then adds, "If I do not share these fears, if I exult at the destiny which God has given to the Church which I love, it is because I believe in the

Inspiration of the Church, in its guidance by the Spirit of God." He goes on to note the formal belief in such guidance which Christian people generally admit in word; maintains that the voice of this Spirit must be sought in the final utterances of the conscience of Christendom; and concludes: "That these 'voices of the Church' do not point in a doctrinal direction, but in directions moral, social, political, intellectual, is a fact well worth noting. Another notable fact is the extreme slowness with which 'Christian opinion' forms itself, — how many ages it required ere serfdom became an acknowledged wrong, for instance. The history of the Church is the record of its education by the Spirit of God. No wonder, then, that we are in some respects in a period of suspense now that we see in part and prophesy in part!"[1]

It was the utterance of a true seer. That phrase "period of suspense" admirably characterizes the forty years which have intervened. Those four decades have seen the rise and the decline of an agnosticism the principal practical tendency in which was, in homely phrase, "to let what we don't know

[1] *Letters of J. R. Green*, ed. by Leslie Stephen, p. 140.

rule what we do know." This agnostic style of thought held the germs of dissolution in itself, and it had only to state its contention fairly and squarely in order to supply its own antidote. In its extreme and most consistent form this was little less than an invitation to men to permit the paralysis of what they instinctively feel to be their highest faculties. James Russell Lowell was no partisan of orthodoxy. He could be depended upon to speak out frankly in behalf of the independent and natural man, in the best sense of those two hard-used adjectives. It will be remembered, however, that after reading the late Sir Leslie Stephen's "English Thought in the Eighteenth Century" he wrote: "I am very much in the state of mind of the Bretons who revolted against the revolutionary government, and wrote upon their banners, 'Give us back our God.' I suppose I am an intuitionalist, and there I mean to stick. I accept the challenge of common sense and claim to have another faculty, as I should insist that a peony was red though twenty color-blind men denied it." [1]

[1] Cf. editorial on "The Outgrown Agnosticism" in the *Boston Transcript* of February 26, 1904.

The vogue of agnosticism was due largely to the fact that it seemed to recognize the suspense of the period to which Green referred. Its inadequacy to meet the need of the thinking world for more than one or two hazy days lay in its failure to trace this suspense to its true source. The world had grown. It was becoming too big to be the creation of some men's God. Hence the temptation to fancy that unless this world of experience could be kept within traditional limits, all faith in God must go. The true antidote for the fear lay in a perception of the truth that every increase of knowledge in any department of human life, when rightly interpreted, is really a revelation of God. It is significant that Green implied this in saying that the voice of the Spirit in the Church had uttered His dictum in terms "moral, social, political, intellectual," quite as often as in terms of abstract doctrine. The fundamental fact is that the source and ground of revelation are *one*, although the channels through which the revelation flows into the experience of men may be so many and so diverse as to seem contradictory.

The fear that has sometimes oppressed

good men until it tempted them into courses of reaction and obscurantism has been an unworthy dread lest a discovery in the realm of the "natural" might somehow contradict a revelation in the realm of the "supernatural." The mocking skepticism of a certain school of naturalists, on the other hand, has had its source in the claim that research into the realm of the "natural" would eventually do away entirely with experience in the realm of the "supernatural." Great store of breath and ink has been expended in attempts to reconcile these two camps. The hostility has persisted despite all temporary truces; and rightly enough, because of the narrow and partial outlook of both groups of combatants. The research of neither has often gone deep enough to discover the common truth which supplies them both with all the really effective weapons in their arsenals. The expected reconciliation at which so many fatuous attempts have been made will never come as the result of a compromise. It is to be no armed peace. Its good fruits will not grow in a field which Religion grudgingly makes over to Science, and on which Science in return pays contemptuous respect to Reli-

gion. All jealous comparison of the relative worth of the experience with which each deals is beside the mark. The principle which governs the value of both to human life lies too deep for discovery by such methods as that.

This principle appears only with the recognition of the fact that there is no room in the universe for a fundamental contradiction of experience; that all experience makes for the discovery of truth; and that all truth is sacred in proportion to its applicability to conduct. These things seem so much like platitudes that the pen almost balks at them. Yet in a sense all life consists in bringing thought and conduct into vital relation to axioms, which in the process must needs be stated and restated, line upon line, precept upon precept. The thing that gave a real significance to the late Professor Drummond's popular books was his recognition of this fact of the continuity of experience, and the fundamental identity of the ground of experience. The natural and the spiritual were not two distinct spheres animated by two distinct principles of life. One resident Force wrought in both in accordance with one self-consistent purpose. Nor was there one principle of revelation in

the sphere of the spiritual and another in the sphere of the natural. The source of life and knowledge in both realms is identical.

It remains to inquire a little more intimately into some of these new harmonies of revelation which should appear as the old dualism or pluralism gives place to faith in a Spirit of all truth, resident in the world and in men. In the first place, what will be the fate of "revelation"? Timid souls have all too often given themselves up to the fear that "revelation" would be despoiled of religious authority unless its method were more or less involved in mystery. The mass of Christian believers in the nineteenth century has been almost as clamant for a sign as was the Galilean multitude in the first. Jesus was slow to gratify curiosity then; the Spirit as really distrusts it now. The signs of the times and the living parables of nature were the avenues through which Christ loved to guide the truth into the experience of those about Him. The whole system of genuinely Christian thought is built upon the principle that everything known is revealed, whether it come by way of a sudden voice from heaven or through toilsome human research. To the Christian who

believes in God resident and executive in His world, every revelation is a discovery and every discovery is a revelation. The Ten Commandments, even upon the most literal interpretation of the splendid Exodus tradition, were a discovery of Moses; and the formula of the attraction of gravitation, with its far-reaching influence upon our knowledge of the material universe, was no less a revelation to Newton. The anthropomorphic finger of God upon the tables of stone has obscured the natural means of Moses' revelation as effectually as the traditional apple upon the mathematician's head has hidden the spiritual significance of Newton's discovery.

It may well be true that some revelations are more immediate than others in this sense, that they involve a far less obvious display of ordinary means, precisely as some discoveries seem more intuitive than others because the chain of revealing events is hidden. In the intercourse of person with person, heart sometimes speaks to heart with such directness that the idea of discovery is obscured in the evident fact of revelation, while in the patient investigation of what we so blindly call material phenomena, the reverse is as often true.

But fundamentally there is an identity of experience here, and to permit revelation to rule discovery off its premises, or vice versa, is to deny the presence of the Spirit in the world.

It follows that any real antinomy between natural and revealed religion is false, and that even a sharply defined distinction must prove unworthy and misleading. Its only justification lies in the fact that there is a shade of difference between the revelation which smites the human heart with the compelling impact of a "thus saith the Lord," and the revelation which is seen to be implicit in the structure of the universe. The former is often sudden, and the latter gradual, in asserting itself. The former may also relate itself more immediately and explicitly to conduct than the latter; it requires less translation in order that its message may be expressed in terms of goodness. Yet even here the distinction is temporary and incidental rather than permanent and essential. Fundamentally, natural and revealed religion are but different names for the same appeal, directed in the former case, it may be, a little more directly to the intellect, and in the latter to the heart.

So by degrees, as Christianity matures and

bears fruit in a genuine faith in God as a Spirit, we shall see the old and long emphasized distinction between natural and supernatural fade away. It can be maintained only upon the hypothesis that God is not really at home in His world, and that He becomes executive in it merely by fits and starts. The sole excuse for the distinction is that it serves a certain purpose in emphasizing the power of initiative conferred upon all persons. The possession of a will puts a person into the sphere of the supernatural. He ceases to be the plaything or tool of circumstance and becomes the master, possibly the originator, of circumstance. Wherever a will, divine or human, sets itself to the fulfillment of a definite purpose, and uses circumstance as its constructive material, there the "supernatural" may be said to come into play. Yet it is doubtful if the word does not cost more than it is worth. It is anti-Christian in the sense that Christianity has no real place for it or need of it. Christ's thought of God the Spirit as the vital divine Force in the world leading men into all truth implies that all God's processes are natural, inasmuch as Nature itself is but an inclusive expression for the sum of them.

This is not to deny what is commonly meant by the supernatural. It certainly is not to deny the miraculous. The opening twentieth century has had too large experience of the miraculous to be skeptical about it; but the rule of faith is that, as experience goes on, the realm of the natural grows. The thing that once appeared to be so out of the course of events as to confuse our endeavors to account for it is bound eventually to find its place as an element in the circle of our larger knowledge. The so-called supernatural is but the supra-normal. It is not beyond nature, but simply beyond our experience of nature. It is not an interference with the orderly process of the divine activity, but rather the glimpse of new and unsuspected divine resources. The province of faith in a God who is a resident spiritual Force in the universe is to enlarge the realm of the normal until it shall suffice to-morrow to include the supra-normal of to-day.

Take, for instance, the case of the long-distance telephone, through which a conversation is maintained over a space of two hundred miles. The quick alternation of question and answer is an absolutely supernatural occurrence to the man who sees in it the travel

to and fro of sound-waves. It is not merely supra-normal; it is abnormal, making an apparent breach in the so-called law of nature which indicates the rate at which sound-waves travel through air or copper wire. Upon the plane of the man who is conversant with the normal conduct of sound-waves but ignorant of the rules governing electrical disturbance, this apparently instantaneous transit of sound is as flat a contradiction of the continuity of nature as any loitering of sun and moon over Aijalon. If he be a man of little scientific faith, he denies the fact on the ground of his regard for a well-established rule of acoustics. If his faith be adequate, he calmly investigates, and a new scientific revelation is vouchsafed to him. It was rashly announced the other day that the discovery of radium was likely to make a serious breach in the law of the conservation of energy; but the announcement savored strongly of scientific superstition. The law of the conservation of energy is but an expression in physical terms of the omnipotence and omnipresence of God. It is a recognition of the essential soundness of the universe, or of the oneness of the universe, to put it tautologically. It registers the faith of

science in a Power which animates creation, not fitfully and spasmodically, but with constant and unfailing adequacy. Experience may demand modification in the form of the law; but the central truth which it strives to express is an almost instinctive utterance of both religion and physical science. It is the cry of heart and flesh alike for the living — that is, the adequate and constant — God.

It will of course be objected that this is pantheism. To which the instant answer must be made that it is as far as possible from being a pantheism which makes personality a late, perhaps a last, product of a world process. Personality is primary and fundamental. The Soul of the Universe must be thought of as a Person, if He is to be rationally regarded at all. To say that this confession of faith in a resident executive Spirit is to make a god of the material universe is like saying that because I rejoice to hear my friend's footfall and to recognize his face, therefore the face and the feet with their fellow members comprise my friend. They are but signs of his presence and agents of his will. There is no discernible element of reason, feeling, or will in the physical components of them, and

yet they are the daily tools for expressing and giving efficacy to reason, feeling, and will.

We pass on to note the exaggerated antinomy between the physical and the spiritual. As an antinomy it is false. The physical is but an expression of the spiritual. The poets, big and little, have always felt it, and thereby established their claim to the divine afflatus. A century has passed since Coleridge wrote:

> "And what if all animated nature
> Be but organic harps diversely framed,
> That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
> Plastic and vast one intellectual breeze,
> At once the soul of each, and God of all."[1]

It seems but day before yesterday since T. E. Brown, the gifted Manx schoolmaster, put the same truth in far less conventional form: —

MY GARDEN

> A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
> Rose plot,
> Fringed pool,
> Ferned grot —
> The veriest school
> Of peace; and yet the fool
> Contends that God is not —
> Not God! in gardens when the eve is cool?
> Nay, but I have a sign;
> 'T is very sure God walks in mine.

[1] Quoted by Allen, *Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 404.

The curse of dualism in both religion and physical science has been that it has always incited its votaries to take sides as between the physical and the spiritual. Asceticism has resulted in one case, materialism in the other. Both are essentially counsels of fear. One undertakes to deny the use of the physical, the other the existence of anything except the physical. The so-called Christian Scientist, with his theoretical denial of the existence of matter, or pain, or sin, is the modern protagonist of the former school. He does not go to the length of preaching asceticism, but he should do so in order to be consistent. Nor does the materialist commonly carry out his philosophy to its gross and hopeless conclusion. Yet the old gibe that in his explanation of experience he is like a nurse who, having attempted to bathe a child, throws away the child with the water, has its application. Precisely as the ascetic disdains God's physical means of self-revelation, so the materialist disdains the revealing Spirit Himself. Neither has a sufficiently ample conception of the universe, and the range of possible human experience, to make his thinking adequate to the larger demands of life. Neither can quite

slake the human thirst for a consistent medium in which to live. To each we can use the words of the woman of Samaria, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." [1]

What we call the physical is but a sign to our senses of an underlying reality. The would-be materialist is himself one of our best witnesses to the truth of this affirmation. In a rather bumptious and sophomoric little book entitled "New Conceptions in Science," Mr. Carl Snyder has a chapter upon "How the Brain Thinks." It is distinctly materialistic in the ordinary sense of that term; but none the less interesting and suggestive. The most suggestive thing in it, however, is the conclusion at which the author arrives. After pointing out that thought or consciousness may "be defined in physical terms as the stimulation of a relatively wide area of the brain," he goes on to show that this stimulation can be effected only by means of so-called "association fibres." Without these "association fibres" there can be no consciousness. When they are present, the currents or waves which

[1] Cf. A. H. Crauford, *Enigmas of the Spiritual Life*, p. 72. A singularly suggestive volume.

pass along them are, as in the case of the twitching which can be induced in the legs of a dead frog, electric in their nature. This, according to Mr. Snyder, is sufficient evidence that conscious life is to be defined in terms of "association fibres" and a "variation of electric potential." He is not, however, willing to be counted a "crass materialist," and patronizingly notices Huxley's unholy alliance with Bishop Berkeley in an endeavor himself to escape the epithet. "For this," he concludes, "there is no need now. There is no 'dead' matter. In some degree all matter lives."[1] It is a pregnant conclusion, admirably illustrating the way in which men who distrust everything but the "physical" yet read into their conclusions in the realm of the "physical" the elements which, when developed, account for the "spiritual." As Martineau once put it, "With a germ, if you can secure it, no doubt a great deal can be done, and it is a clever device of the physical expounder to pack one, unnoticed, into every atom in readiness to yield what he wants beyond mere mechanical phenomena. . . . We

[1] Snyder, *New Conceptions in Science*, pp. 268–270.

know of germs only as the product of perfect beings."[1]

It might as well be admitted first as last that the physical and spiritual represent but different aspects of one inclusive experience. Christ seemed so to regard it. The material world in which He found Himself was all alive, and "every common bush on fire with God." The physical is the temporary form which the eternal Energy assumes in the working out of transcendent purposes. It can never comprehend or include, nor, on the other hand, can it ever exist without, the spiritual. The world passeth away — the form is ever changing — but the Energy which is its ground and reason abideth forever.

Some years have now elapsed since very much has been said upon the subject of "natural goodness." But there was a day when characters of the Sydney Carton type in fiction raised grave questions in the breasts of conscientious and faithful people. What was to be said about the generosity, sometimes reaching to the point of self-immolation, depicted in these lives? How was it to

[1] *Hours of Thought*, ii. 112.

be accounted for in view of their occasional apparent divorce from religion, and their frequent divorce from orthodoxy? By what standard was the efficient goodness of one of Bret Harte's Argonauts to be judged? What standing in the light of the Gospel had Mr. John Hay's conclusion concerning Jim Bludso, the rough but heroic engineer, who held his burning boat against the river-bank until the last passenger escaped?

> "He seen his duty, a dead sure thing, —
> And went for it there and then;
> And Christ ain't going to be too hard
> On a man that died for men."

The question, to be sure, was rather an academic one in so far as these characters in fiction were concerned; but it had an immediately practical side. For these figments of imaginative brains sometimes materialized into solid flesh and walked our streets. The problem of their fate as men of God or children of the devil was awfully and pathetically real to people who, humbly rejoicing in their own faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ, yet trembled for their friends, because these friends, though good men and women, showing the fruits of the Spirit in

their lives, seemed to give no sign of the technical experience of conversion. Here stood the Scripture, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;" here, too, were the evident fruits of the Spirit. How were they to resolve the contradiction? We all know the old phrase about the "uncovenanted mercies" to which such souls were commended; but we forget, or perhaps incline to be a little contemptuous of, the deep searchings of heart and the fervent prayer which their lot called forth.

The contradiction is resolved only when we realize that all goodness is of one fundamental sort; it springs from one source; it is instinct with one life; and looks toward one goal. The Spirit to whom Christ introduced the disciples was to lead men into all kinds of truth and right living. He was to prove Himself the great Dynamic of Goodness in the world, despising no instruments because of their imperfections, and being balked by no conventions of men. He was to be as ready as Jesus Himself to sit at meat with publicans and sinners. The ultimate question which was to decide a man's fate was whether or no

he accepted the Spirit of Goodness in such a degree as to make it the really efficient force in his life. The moment that this came to pass he was a saved man. A long and arduous journey might well remain before this new force in him should gain the upper hand over the evil self in such degree as to give him the joy of conscious and full discipleship. But the journey was begun; and it was none the less in the right direction and sure of its goal because it sometimes missed the conventional halting-places by the way.

When, for instance, Carlyle spoke of his "conversion," men have generally taken it for granted that he used the word in a sense quite different from that in which it is commonly received. Yet the difference is one of form rather than of substance. Any man is converted when a great effluence of the Spirit of all Truth takes such possession of him as to become dynamic in his life, coördinating his scattered and hitherto aimless activities and enduing his personality with coherence and force. This is as far as possible from saying that he at once becomes a perfect instrument in the Spirit's hands. Nothing is more characteristic of the Genius of Christianity than

His catholicity. He uses, with an ingenuity as divine as His charity, all sorts and conditions of imperfect means. He manages to make the most absurdly inadequate provision of loaves and fishes serve for a multitude, and then deigns to collect even the fragments which the multitude He has just fed are ready to contemn.

"I am aware," says Burke somewhere, "that the age is not what we all wish, but I am sure that the only means to check its degeneracy is heartily to concur in whatever is best in our time." It is an inspired utterance, instinct with the divine charity of the Spirit. The method of development through a resident and immanent Force which ever endeavors to make the best out of that which has the savor of health and life in it is the way of the Kingdom's advance. There are not two kinds of goodness. There are not two sorts of truth. Wherever goodness appears there the Spirit lives, and wherever truth is uttered there the Spirit speaks.

Hence it follows that we have no cause to fear the approach of honest criticism to any of our sacred writings. Criticism of the genuine sort is a simple endeavor to get at the

thing that *is*, and to make it unmistakably plain. Its method may be blundering and fatuous, to be sure, and so far forth there is a place and a call for the *criticus criticorum;* but the one ground that the critic of the critics should forever eschew is the claim that the Scriptures are sacrosanct and therefore exempt from the critical approach. To claim an inspiration for them that makes them a magic means of communicating divine truth is to put a slight upon the work of the Spirit to Whom it was Christ's mission to introduce men. All inspiration which reveals the truth and enables a man to communicate it is of one fundamental sort. There is no question but that Holy Scripture brings truth into such vital relation to the mind, heart, and will as to minister to salvation. In a sense that is unique the message of Scripture has proven itself to be an integrating and co-ordinating force in human life. It has made for oneness in thought and conduct. Wherever its immediate influence has seemed for the moment to be divisive and disintegrating, it has been only by way of preparation for a unity that should be real instead of superficial and formal. In this positive

and constructive ability which it has shown to reveal truth in terms of goodness lies the evidence of its inspiration. The fruits of the Spirit grow in the soil which Scripture teaching has cleansed, enriched, and planted. Hence we argue that Scripture lives with the Spirit's life; the message of Scripture intelligently and generously construed is the Spirit's message, and thus authoritative. On the other hand, we forget one of Christ's greatest and most significant words when we proceed to deny a cognate and legitimately related inspiration to other and later writings. The divine Presence was to be immediate and appreciable in a new sense after Christ's revealing sojourn with men. He was to be known as the Helper or Comforter — practically a new name for deity. Is it to be supposed that He would no longer use the written word as a means of translating His message to the heart? The notion that inspired writing ceased with the composition of the Fourth Gospel is altogether out of harmony with that Gospel's teaching. It is as mechanical and irreverent as the notion that the Fourth Gospel's own claim to inspiration is immediately dependent upon its exact date and

authorship. Inspiration is too subtle and pervasive a matter to be confined to one century or one group of men. All great writers who have reached the hearts and beneficently influenced the conduct of men have known in some measure the self-same Power at work in and through them which wrought by the hands of Isaiah and Paul.

The reader may recall the admirable criticism of Dickens by Thackeray in which this doctrine is implicit. It occurs at the close of the lecture upon "Charity and Humor," and is too long for quotation; but I cull a sentence or two. "As for the charities of Mr. Dickens, multiplied kindnesses which he has conferred upon us all; upon our children; upon people educated and uneducated; upon the myriads here and at home,[1] who speak our common tongue; have not you, have not I, all of us reason to be thankful to this kind friend, who soothed and charmed so many hours, brought pleasure and sweet laughter to so many homes; made such multitudes of children happy; endowed us with such a sweet store of gracious thoughts, fair fancies, soft sympathies, hearty enjoyments? There

[1] This lecture was first delivered in America.

are creations of Mr. Dickens's which seem to me to rank as personal benefits; figures so delightful, that one feels happier and better for knowing them, as one does for being brought into the society of very good men and women. The atmosphere in which these people live is wholesome to breathe in; you feel that to be allowed to speak to them is a personal kindness; you come away better for your contact with them; your hands seem cleaner from having the privilege of shaking theirs. . . . I may quarrel with Mr. Dickens's art a thousand and a thousand times, I delight and wonder at his genius; I recognize in it — I speak with awe and reverence — a commission from that Divine Beneficence, whose blessed task we know it will one day be to wipe every tear from every eye. Thankfully I take my share of the feast of love and kindness which this gentle, and generous, and charitable soul has contributed to the happiness of the world. I take and enjoy my share, and say a benediction for the meal." [1] This is not to ascribe to "David Copperfield" the spiritual significance of the Epistle

[1] W. M. Thackeray, *Works*, Biographical Edition, vii. 724, 725.

to the Galatians. But it is to advance the claim, and that upon the highest authority, that in so far as the modern master of fiction proved his possession of a special commission to proclaim the worth of peace and good-will to men, his inspiration is of the same fundamental nature as that which gave illumination and authority to St. Paul.

Scarce any question has seemed more vital to thoughtful men during the last four hundred years than the inquiry into the Ultimate Source of Authority. It has not always been clearly and succinctly stated. Yet it underlay the Reformation; and it has been implicit in every great theological and ethical controversy since. The three quarters in which this ultimate authority has been sought and wherein it has been supposed by some to reside have been the Church, the Bible, and the Reason. Each has been made to claim the right of *ipse dixit* by disciples who loved it not wisely, but too well, to gain any exact notion of its scope and office. The Romanist has accepted the authority of the Church only to be driven to bolster it up by the sorry expedient of papal infallibility. Too many a Protestant, departing in some

measure from the purpose of the first generation of reformers, has looked to the Bible for the last and authoritative word, forgetting that the Bible is a literature of beginnings. In so far as he has become a bibliolater he has been threatened with confusion by every new discovery in the realm of Biblical science. No man more than he would have cause to dread the reappearance of the lost Book of Jasher, or the discovery of a genuine and hitherto unknown saying of Christ.

The rationalist has been quite as narrow and inadequate in his treatment of the Reason as his fellows in their view of Church and Book. Using it, and philosophizing about it, as though it were nothing more than a faculty of ratiocination, or a device for grinding out syllogisms, he has sought in it an authority practically as external as Church or Book could be. With a fine contempt for the "superstitions" of his brethren, he has ground his logic-chopping machine only to discover its product to be so meagre and jejune that men would not feed upon it. Under the régime of the rationalist, as in Thomson's "City of Dreadful Night," Faith is poisoned, Hope starves, and Love suffers violence.

What shall we say to these things? Is the search for authority vain? Is life to struggle on without direction? Is the deep longing of the human heart for an infallible guide and stay to be treated like the demon in the parable, turned out into desert places and left to wander there until perchance it find evil company and come back to make its old home worse than ever? No, not while Church, Bible, and Reason remain. For the truth is that man's dependence upon these three authorities has been wrong only in so far as it has been ill-proportioned and exclusive. There is authority in the Church, inasmuch as the Church comprehends the Christian experience of nearly twenty centuries. There is authority in the Bible, and very great authority. For the Bible, more than anything else, fixes the Christian tradition; in the most succinct and intelligible form it hands down to us from Christ the secret of turning truth into goodness; and it opens a veritable way of salvation. Evangelist is still, and bids fair always to be, the best guide to the Wicket Gate, through which men on the way to the Celestial City need to pass. The Bible is a chief servant of Christianity; but "the ser-

vant need not be perfect; it suffices that she be faithful."[1]

Again, every authoritative word of life to a man must be interpreted by his Reason before it can be translated into an act. But the Reason is more and better than a device for the making of syllogisms. Its conclusions in the realm of faith and conduct are safe only when feeling and will bring their sympathetic assistance to the intellect. Let us grant that they have no power to set a verdict arbitrarily aside. They do have power, however, to order a reëxamination of the evidence with especial reference to its completeness and adequacy. The Ultimate Source of Authority is not an objective thing. It has never been fixed, codified, and finished. Christ's enunciation of the Law of Love was but the statement of its principle. He seemed to shrink from explicit dicta upon specific acts. Some of His most gracious and significant words were wrapped up in cryptic forms, so that the living kernel might seem the better worth having in contrast with the husk which must be reft away. Indeed, it might be claimed without extravagance and irreverence that He thought of His

[1] Sabatier, *Religions of Authority*, p. 162.

own human body as such a husk, which must needs be removed before His permanent and abiding Spirit could have scope.

In the Spirit of unity and power, which coördinates and integrates all being into a universe, the ultimate Source of Authority is to be sought. Not until this Spirit is found out unto perfection can the Source of Authority be comprehended in its fullness. But just because of this same Spirit's immanence, authority fitted to, and adequate for, the guidance of life is always at hand. It is implicit in the experience of men. The conscience of Christendom, educated by the Bible, by the experience of the Church, by the partial light issuing from the ethnic faiths and applied to specific cases of conduct by the human Reason acting with a full consciousness of its limitations, cannot go far wrong. If it be true to itself, it will not miss the mark.

But this thing is to be noted. The authority exercised by the conscience of Christendom is never a complete and fixed quantity. Nor is it ever based merely upon the authority of the past. It is future-regarding. It considers precedent, but it does not regard precedent as its master. It counts upon an

increasing revelation. It welcomes new experience and the new duties which it will bring. Its animating principle is the Golden Rule. Its norm is the law of an endless life. Its application to specific conduct is to be reverently ordered by that chief practical charisma of the Spirit known as Common Sense.

APPENDIX

SYNOPSIS OF ARGUMENT

In this brief statement of the Dynamic of Christianity I have asked my readers to proceed upon the principle that the influence of Christ in the world is a phenomenon worth accounting for; that theology, viewed as the study and explanation of Christian experience, makes a legitimate demand upon the attention of thinking men; and that a total conception of the universe which may minister to that coherence of life and thought which we call peace is to be ardently desired. (Cf. Sabatier, Religions of Authority, pp. 377, 378.)

With a view to the discovery of the underlying principle which has given to Christianity its tremendous vitality and its singular applicability to an ever-changing environment, I first developed the premiss that the Science of Christian Experience must take impartial account of facts, not merely with willingness, but with the same avidity which marks other sciences. (Chapter I., Introduction.) It must keep a multitude of its conclusions open. It must expect and welcome change and development.

This introduction was followed by a chapter designed to characterize the attitude of last century

— especially that portion of it which has elapsed since the promulgation of the Doctrine of Development — toward the subject-matter of our discussion. At its close some special reasons were cited to justify a confident and expectant attitude on the part of the theologian of to-day. (Chapter II., The Zeitgeist.) I then proceeded to note the material with which our inquiry would be forced to deal. Three chapters were given to a consideration of the present status of thought among the rank and file of intelligent people upon the Science of Religious Experience, or Theology (Chapter III., The Present State of Theological Thought among the People), upon religion as life's guide and inspiration (Chapter IV., The Religion of the People), and upon the relations of men to one another in society (Chapter V., The Social Unrest).

The result of this inquiry served to emphasize the almost paralyzing incoherence of popular thought upon these great matters which at the same time absolutely refuse to be banished from men's minds. They represent some of life's most immediate and insistent interests. They are restive under the *ipse dixit* of external authority; yet the problems which they present have a singular affinity for Christianity. Wisely or unwisely, men are always feeling that there is balm in Christianity's Gilead for their religious and social wounds if only they could get it applied. As Professor Peabody has put it, "This is one of the most surprising traits of the Gospel. It seems to each age to have been written

for the sake of the special problems which at the moment appear most pressing." (Jesus Christ and the Social Question, p. 74.)

It seemed worth while, therefore, to look into the teachings of Christ for some central principle vital enough to be the resident force in a permanent and ever-developing influence upon life. The hypothesis upon which the remainder of the discussion has proceeded is that this principle is to be found in Christ's doctrine — sometimes neglected almost to the point of oblivion, and sometimes maltreated into shapes of wild superstition — of the Spirit. (Chapter VI., The Thesis.) In the chapters following, this thesis was tested by the Christian tradition as comprised in the Bible (Chapter VII., The Witness of Scripture), by the corporate experience of the Church (Chapter VIII., The Witness of the Christian Church), and by the testimony of individuals concerning the moving springs of their own religious or irreligious lives (Chapter IX., The Witness of Individual Experience). Our investigation appeared to go far to validate the claim that in this doctrine of the Spirit as the immanent or resident Force in the universe, the Ground of phenomena, physical and spiritual, the Revealer of truth in every department of experience, we have a vital and coördinating principle, which puts the phenomena of the religious life and of physical science into natural and harmonious relation.

The concluding chapters were devoted to a consideration of some changes in popular definition

and some new harmonies of revelation which must be expected and ought to be welcomed as the result of this closer application of the Genius of Christianity to our thinking and doing. Chapter X. set forth the new freedom which this Dynamic of Christianity confers upon faith. This principle is one adapted to deliver men from fear and to clothe them with peace. It is a doctrine of universal religious application. Its truth not only makes appeal to the imagination, but is capable of apprehension by the reason and of translation into terms of conduct (pp. 221–233). More specifically: —

(1) It makes men at home in the present (pp. 233–237).

(2) It gives wholesome elasticity to their institutions, affording adequate room for growth in creeds, worship, sacraments, and polity (pp. 237–246).

(3) It exalts Reason into its true place as a chief agent of Revelation (pp. 246–251).

(4) It enables us to welcome the results of historical and philosophical criticism (pp. 251–253).

(5) It makes clear the real religious status of every man who loves the truth and tries to do it (pp. 253, 254).

Chapter XI., entitled The New Meaning of Some Old Words, developed the thesis that all words are sacred in proportion as they have come to connote genuine experience. In view of the principles already established, all of Religion's definitions

must be framed and its words used in expectation of an increase in content. Then followed the application of this principle to such terms as God (p. 260), the Trinity (p. 263), Sin (p. 267), Religion (p. 270), Salvation (p. 272), Atonement (p. 274), the Church (p. 277), the Bible and Inspiration (p. 279), and a brief discussion of the permanent significance of such a doctrine as that of the Virgin Birth (p. 284).

The concluding Chapter XII., on the New Harmonies of Revelation, emphasized the fact that the source and ground of all knowledge is One, and that every increase in knowledge is a revelation; discovery and revelation being but different terms for different aspects of the same experience (pp. 294–296); so with "natural" and "revealed" religion (p. 296); so also with natural and supernatural (pp. 296, 297), and the place of miracle (pp. 298–300). There is no room in the universe for any fundamental contradiction of experience, and everywhere the physical is but an expression of the spiritual (pp. 300–305). (Cf. the significance of "natural goodness," pp. 305–309.) The Ultimate Source of Authority is not an objective thing, fixed, codified, and finished; but really existent in the Spirit of Unity and Power (pp. 314–319).

I am as far as possible from claiming that this principle is new, or even that its enunciation is original; but however old the truth, its restatement will never be hackneyed or out of date as long as men insist upon its practical neglect.

Objection will be made that the endeavor thus to coördinate our thinking upon "religion" and "science" looks in the direction of pantheism; but it has already been noted that while pantheism as commonly understood practically denies personality, the doctrine of a Resident and Executive Spiritual Power makes personality fundamental. Some will say that the positions taken here are destructive of much that has been counted vital and distinctive in Christianity. To which the only answer that need be made is that every item of genuine Christian experience is held to be significant and therefore sacred; that no great doctrine which has moulded life is valueless or without vital meaning, and that such rearrangement of ranks as reinforcements necessitate is in reality a constructive process, even though the old alignment suffer. If our discussion signify anything, it is that there is room in the Christian conception of the universe and man's place in it for all truth; that the old distinction between sacred and secular truth has no foundation; that revelation and discovery are but different aspects of the self-manifestation of one efficient and self-consistent Power; and that all life lived in the light and use of truth is sacramental.

INDEX

INDEX

Abraham, 87.
Achilles, congenial to our experience, 196.
Agitator, the, one conscious of "the difference," 119; and the reformer, 119.
Agnostic, the, his fight against dogma, 125, 126.
Ahriman, 50.
Allen, A. V. G., his *Continuity of Christian Thought* quoted, 32, 33, 39; cited, 301; his *Christian Institutions* cited, 173; quoted, 175.
Alline, Henry, the case of the conversion of, 200, 212.
Alsace, peasants slain in, 100.
America, new era of theological development in, 11–15; discovery of, 83; provides opportunity for the poor man, 103.
Amos, the prophet, voiced the social problem, 101.
Amusements, 60.
Anabaptists as a fruit of the Reformation, 85.
Anarchist, his notion of authority, 85.
Anarchy, sporadic, one of the prices we pay for epidemic freedom, 182.
Anthropology, 19.
Anthropomorphic conception of the deity, 132.
Apocrypha, the, has few references to the Spirit, 149.
Apostles' Creed, clause relating to the resurrection of the body, 239, 240; clause "conceived by the Holy Ghost," 285.
Apostolic succession, 173.
Argument from design, its treatment by evolution, 41, 42.
Aristocrat, his notion of authority, 86.
Aristodemus confuted by Socrates, 1.
Arminian liturgy of the Church of England, 239.
Arnold, Matthew, cited on conduct, 72; quoted, 235, 253.
Article IX. of the XXXIX. Articles, 59.
Aryan religions, elements of, in Christianity, 90.
Asceticism, 169, 302.
Ashley, Lord. *See* Shaftesbury, Lord.
Assertion, dogmatism of, 20.
Astronomy, 19.
"Atherton," in *Hours with the Mystics*, quoted, 176.
Atonement, the, 14, 265; larger meaning of, 274–277.
Augustine, his derivation of word *religion*, 271.
Authority, its place in the Church, 82, 83; its place in the Reformation, 83, 84, 101; change passing upon the notion of, 85, 86; effect of French Revolution on governmental, 85, 101; ultimate source of, 286, 314–319.

Autun, besieged by the Bagauds, 96.
Averroes, mentioned, 183.

Bacon, Francis, mentioned, 127.
Bacracz, Cardinal, and the Kurucks' uprising, 98.
Bagauds, uprising of, 96.
Baptism for service, 209.
Baptists, 244.
Baur, F. C., his book sealed to many English readers, 11.
Berkeley, Bishop, 304.
Bible, the divine and human element in, 52, 53; infallibility of, 53, 279–282; traditions of, questioned, 88, 284; authority in the, 316. *See* Scriptures.
Biblical criticism, Bushnell and, 14; a cause of doubt in religion, 87.
"Big Man" of the Fuegians, 132, 134.
Bildad, 27.
Birrell, Augustine, his essays, 186; cited, 189.
Black death, the, 176, 177.
Bludso, Jim, 306.
Book, the, made the head of a system, 83.
Bosanquet, Mrs. Bernard, *The Standard of Life* cited, 104, 111.
Bossuet, questions Leibnitz on the variableness of the Protestant churches, 33.
Boswell, James, on the Presbyterians, 47; his life of Johnson quoted, 47.
Brain, secretes thought as the liver secretes bile, 29.
Bridgewater Treatises, 42.
Brierly, J., quoted, 188.
Brown, T. E., quoted, 301.
Browning, Robert, his comment on the prologue of Genesis, 24; his *The Ring and the Book* quoted, 24, 71; and Goethe, compared, 24, 25.
Bundschuh insurrection, 98.
Bunyan, John, mystic, 178; mentioned, 190; epic quality of his *Grace Abounding*, 196.
Burgon, mentioned, 238.
Burke, Edmund, quoted on the age, 309.
Bushnell, Horace, his place in the new era of theological development, 13–15; his Life by T. T. Munger quoted, 14, 15; quoted, 67.
Butler, Samuel, mentioned, 42.
Buxton, Fowell, mentioned, 115.
Byron, Lord, 235.

Cade, Jack, his insurrection, 97.
Calvin, 93, 280.
Calvinism, 48; its influence on American theological thought, 11, 12; rationalism of, 246.
Calvinistic articles of the Church of England, 239.
Carlyle, Thomas, *Sartor Resartus* quoted, 4; and Kant, 9; his conversion, 308.
Carton, Sydney, 305.
Catholicism, real issue between Montanism and, 175, 176.
Cause, a transcendent, man a believer in, 132.
Cause - and - effect habit of thought, 15.
Causes, man a natural believer in resident, 131, 132.
Chaucer, mentioned, 102.
Child labor, reformation of, in the last century, 111.
Chinese, superstition of the, 132.
Christ Jesus, the partial nature of His work, 142; His life was future-regarding, 142, 144; expediency of His departure, 144, 145, 225; His references

to the Holy Spirit, 145, 229; His difficulty in interpreting the Word to His followers, 152; development theory found in His teachings, 217; taught the presence of the Spirit, 217, 232; saving power of, 230; His idea of conversion, 231; atonement through, 265; infancy and virgin birth of, 284.
Christian, the modern, is a dualist in philosophy, 50; finds antinomy between nature and the supernatural, 50–52; his attitude in regard to the Bible, 52; his attempt to frame a doctrine of God, 53 ff.; of the Kingdom of God, 56–62; difficulties presented to him in the church, 56–62.
Christian Endeavor, Society of, 44.
Christian growth, 14.
Christian Scientist, 302.
Christianity, is a living organism, 21; Romanes on, 37, 38; practical, of the time, 42; modern organization under, 43–45; its struggle with religious observance, 76; elements of Aryan and Semitic religions in, 90; and ethnic religions, 91, 92; Platonism and, 169; three degrees in, 180; promised freedom and peace, 221; interdependence of faith and good works in, 226.
Church, the Christian, full of youthful vigor, 42; various organizations under, in the last century, 43–45; lack of system in theological thinking among members, 50; the distinctions of sects in, 56–58; the need of union in, 58; and the world, 58–62; system-building in, 82, 83; the place given to authority, 82; as an article of *vertu*, 123; slow to apprehend the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, 145, 146, 151; Holy Spirit works through the, 160; the witness of the, 168–192; asceticism and enthusiasm in, 169; the prophet's place in, 169, 170; and revelation, 172, 174; and individual rights, 173; is under the influence of a resident Power, 192; its organizations, how affected by the larger doctrine of the Spirit, 244, 245, 278.
Church of England, its liturgy and creed, 238; and freedom of thought, 288.
Church of Rome, Macaulay on, 1, 18; built on system, 82, 171.
Church's Sense of Responsibility, article upon, cited, 112 n.
Cicero, his idea of religion, 270.
Clairvoyant, the, 131.
Clifford, W. K., theologian and scientist, 17.
Cobbe, Frances Power, quoted, 199 n.
Cobbler's banner, the, 98.
Colenso, Bishop, his *Higher Criticism of the Bible*, 3; his book disapproved of by Lord Shaftesbury, 8.
Coleridge, S. T., his influence on theological thought, 4, 9; quoted, 301.
Colossians, Epistle to, cited, 272.
Common sense, 319.
Comte, Auguste, mentioned, 19, 23, 93.
Conduct, the office of religion to regulate, 73; how affected by religious doubt, 73; its relation to faith, 74, 75, 78, 92; its degeneration into observ-

ance, 74; regulation must come from within, 78; reference to underlying doctrine, 80.
Congregationalist and Christian World cited, 112 n.
Congregationalists, 244.
Conolly, John, banished the strait waistcoat, 114.
Conscience, its influence on the social problem, 101.
Conscience of Christendom, article upon cited, 112 n.
Consecration of Christian life, 209.
Conservation of energy, the law of, is an expression in physical terms of the omnipresence of God, 299.
Constitutions, periodic amendment of, 168, 169.
Continuity, its principle becoming to Theism, 40.
Continuity of nature, 126.
Conversion, religious, 60, 308; scientific attempts to investigate it, 193, 200, 207; is a normal experience, 198; excitement of, 199; reality of, 199; typical instances of, 200 ff., 214; immanent Power recognized in, 208, 215; character of the experience, 212, 213; accords with doctrine of evolution, 214.
Conviction of sin, 265, 268, 270.
Copperfield, David, 313.
Corinthians, 1st Epistle to the, cited, 164 n.
Corn laws in England, 103.
Cosmic Force, 134; evolutionary theory based on the existence of a, 140.
Counter-Reformation, 181; wrought two results, 183.
Crauford, A. H., his *Enigmas of the Spiritual Life* cited, 303.
Creation, Assyrian tradition of, 91.
Creed of the Church of England, 239.
Creeds, 239–243; elasticity of, 239; those that express experience will abide, 244, 274.
Criminal, the, work done in the last century for, 114.
Crofton, Sir Walter, mentioned, 116.
Cure of souls, 197.
Custom finds worshipers among theologians, 34.

Dale, R. W., case of the friend of, 206, 214.
Darwin, Charles, his *Origin of Species* and *Descent of Man* mentioned, 135.
Darwin, Erasmus, 17.
Dawkins, Boyd, letter of J. R. Green to, 288.
Dead hand, the impotence of the, 124.
Death penalty, change of sentiment in regard to, 116.
Deed, the, its place in the thought of the nineteenth century, 23, 24; emphasized by the church, 45.
Definitions mark stages in a process of development, 259.
Deism, 41, 53; rationalism of, 246.
Deluge, Assyrian tradition of, 91.
Dependent Classes, Upon the Lot of the, article cited, 112 n.; work of the nineteenth century for, 114.
Destiny, fulfillment of, 264, 265.
Development, Doctrine of, its apostles' attitude toward the theologians, 34; feature of purposefulness in, 139. *See also* Evolution, Doctrine of.

Devil, theory that the earth belongs to the, 59.
Dickens, Charles, Thackeray on, 312.
Divine Spirit. *See* Holy Spirit, Spirit.
Dobson, Austin, his *Prayer of the Swine to Circe* quoted, 68.
Doctrine, relation of conduct to, 80; built on system, 82.
Dogma, theology bound by, 31; attacked by the agnostic, 126; as a servant, 126.
Dorner, his definition of personality, 264.
Dosza, Transylvanian leader, 98.
Doubt, religious, its effect upon conduct, 73; factitious, 81; Biblical criticism a cause of, 87–90; study of comparative religion a cause of, 90; misapprehension of personality closely related to, 93.
Dualistic philosophy, 50 ff., 122.
Dunant, J. H., Red Cross Movement due to experiences of, 117.
Drummond, Henry, 191; source of his popularity, 293.
Dutch, uprising of the, 99; the number slain, 100.
Dyke, Henry van, his term "cureless melancholy of disillusion," 68.

Eagle compared with Christian freedom, 222.
Ecce Homo, disapproval of, by Lord Shaftesbury, 8.
Eckhart, 178, 183.
Eden, Sir Frederick, his *State of the Poor* cited, 102, 110; mentioned, 113.
Edersheim, his *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* cited, 149.
Edwards, Jonathan, mentioned, 12.
Eliphaz, 27.
Empiric, the, exalted in last two generations, 86.
England, new era of theological development in, 9–11; opposition to German thought, 10.
Enthusiasm in the Christian Church, 169.
Ephesians, Epistle to the, cited, 165, 272.
Episcopalians, 244.
Erasmus quoted on the rise of the Dutch, 99.
Erskine, Thomas, influence of, in theological thought, 4; his *Kingdom of Christ* mentioned, 4.
Ethnic religions, importance attached to, 260.
Ethnic trinities, 91.
Evangelical, not bound by tradition, 2.
Evangelical preaching, 78, 79.
Evangelical Revival, its force spent, 9.
Everett, C. C., his *Immortality and other Essays* cited, 208, 219.
Evil, problem of, 267; present in all ages, 27.
Evolution, Spencerian definition of, cited, 216.
Evolution, Doctrine of, 14; growth of its acceptance through its theological significance, 17; its first effect on theological systems, 28–30, 135; attitude of Protestant theologians toward, 32; its method an aid to theology, 40–42; and doctrine of final causes, 41, 136; substantiates theology, 41; gives us a larger teleology, 42, 140; demands a unification of knowledge, 134; its method is universal, 135; its attitude toward the future, 137; holds process of develop-

ment to be purposeful, 139; reasonableness of, 139, 140; based on the existence of a cosmic force, 140; provides us with a principle essentially religious, 140; and religious conversion, 214; found in Christ's teachings, 217.
Exodus, Book of, cited, 147.
Experience, 258, 298; God as an, 262, 263; the power of the Church lay in spiritual, 184, 185.
Ezekiel, vision of, 240, 271.

Fairbairn, A. M., his *Christ in the Centuries* cited, 77; his *Religion in History and Modern Life*, and *Influence of the Intellectual Movement*, cited, 104; his *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology* cited, 26, 196; quoted, 224; his use of word *Socinian*, 259.
Faith, the new freedom of, 221–254; interdependence of good works and, 226; a saving, 229.
Faith, Christian, its relation to conduct, 74, 75, 78, 92; not content with observance, 74.
Fall, the, 14.
Fanaticism, how a fruit of the Reformation, 84, 85.
Father of the Gods, 134.
Fathers, Pilgrim, ultra-Calvinism of, 11.
Faust, his translation of St. John's Gospel, 22.
Fénelon, 178.
Fiction, theological topics in recent, 62–67; use of, in theological discussion, 63.
Final causes, doctrine of, treatment of, by evolution, 41.
First cause, 133.
Fisher, G. P., address of, cited, 40; his *History of the Christian Church*, 234.
Fiske, John, 27; a theologian as well as scientist, 18, 35; his *Cosmic Philosophy* mentioned, 18.
Flaccus, letter to, 179.
Flagellants, 177.
Force is the presence of God, 229.
Force, ultimate, 28.
Formality in religion, 74, 75.
Fox, George, mysticism of, 178.
Franconia, peasants slain in, 99.
Frederic, Harold, his *Theron Ware* cited, 6.
Freedom, promised by Christianity, 221; as taught by the Apostle Paul, 223, 224.
French constitution, the, as periodical literature, 168.
French Revolution, effect of, on governmental authority, 85; the poor found a voice with the, 100, 101.
Fritz, Joss, 98.
Froissart, as chronicler of the Jacquerie, 97.
Froude, Hurrell, his work, 190.
Froude, J. A., 9.
Future, the place given it by evolution, 137, 138.

Genesis, Book of, 53; Browning's comment on the prologue of, 24.
German influence on theological thought, 3, 4, 9, 11.
Germany, traits in, that are born of the Reformation, 182, 183.
Gillen. *See* Spencer and Gillen.
Gnostic, the, upheld continuity of revelation, 174.
God, as the Ultimate Cause, 134; Spirit of, 147, 229; Holy Spirit an expression of His immanence, 165, 227–229; as an experience, 181, 262; as a person, 229, 231, 300; attempt to de-

fine, 260-264; revelation of, as Spirit, 266.
Godet, F., his *Gospel of John* cited, 159.
Goethe, mentioned, 135; his *Faust* quoted, 22, 23, 25; his forecast of the philosophical temper of the nineteenth century, 23, 24, 135; and Browning compared, 24, 25.
Good works, interdependence of faith and, 226.
Goodness, all, springs from one source, 301.
Gore, Bishop, 35.
Gosman, Alexander, address of, cited, 40 n.
Governments, experience struggle between system and spirit, 168.
Graham, Sir James, 255.
Gravitation, law of, 50; is God's revelation of His presence to a stone, 229.
Gray, Bishop, his criticism of Colenso, 8.
Green, John Richard, his *Short History of the English People* cited, 102; letter to Boyd Dawkins, 288.
Greene, G. A., quoted, 68.
Guyon, Madame, 178.
Gwatkin cited, 170.

Hamilton, William, quoted, 36.
Hardy, Thomas, more preacher than novelist, 63, 64; his *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* cited, 64; *Jude the Obscure* cited, 64; his treatment of fate and passion, 64, 65; his God, 65.
Harte, Bret, 306.
Hastings, James, his *Dictionary of the Bible* cited, 146, 148, 165, 170.
Hay, John, his Jim Bludso, 306.
Headlam, cited, 161, 162.
Hebrew Scriptures, all energy referred to a divine source in, 148.
Hegel, 156; influence of, in new era of theological thought, 10; anecdote of Comte and, 10; reception of his philosophy in England and Germany, 10, 11; and Strauss, 10, 11; his philosophy of the Trinity, 197.
Hegelianism has lost its damning power, 156.
Henley, W. E., quoted, 69.
Historic method adopted in theology, 40.
History, the Spirit in, 159 n.
Hodder, Edwin, his *Life and Work of the Earl of Shaftesbury* quoted, 8, 9.
Holy Ghost, the modern sin against the, 250.
Holy Spirit, Christ's references to, 145; His work in the world, 145, 157–159, 166; anticipation of, in the Old Testament, 146–151; meaning and use of the Hebrew word, 146, 147; lack of mention of, in the Apocrypha, 149; presentation of, in the New Testament, 151–165; character of His influence and guidance, 153–159; works through men, 160; always an expression of divine immanence, 165, 227–229; personality of, 231. *See* Spirit.
Holy Spirit, doctrine of the, 141, 145; Christian Church slow to apprehend, 145, 146, 151; survival of, among the Alexandrian Jews, 150; Johannine treatment of, 155, 156–159, 161; Pauline, 161; as the doctrine of God's immanence, 227 ff. *See* Spirit, the larger doctrine of the.
Homer, the hidings of his power 196.
Homily, weakness of, 79, 80.

Hosea, Book of, cited, 75.
Human spirit, the Iliad and the Odyssey of the, 196, 198.
Huxley, T. H., theologian and scientist, 17; mentioned, 238, 304.

Idea of Divinity, 28.
Iliad, the, of the human spirit, 196, 198.
Imprisonment for debt, abolition of, 115.
Incarnation, doctrine of the, 91, 284–286.
Independents occupied with doctrinal controversy, 4.
"Index Expurgatorius," 183.
Individual, the life of the, guarded by modern society, 116, 117; advance of, during the last century, 118; rights of, upheld by the Montanist, 173; in religious conversion, 207, 208.
Individual experience, witness of, 193–220.
Infancy, prolongation of, importance of, in evolution of man, 137, 138.
Inge, his *Christian Mysticism* cited, 27, 169, 181, 184, 262; quoted, 52.
Inquisition, the, 183, 184.
Insane, the, work done in the last century for, 114.
Inspiration, doctrine of, 84, 279 ff.
Inspiration of the Bible, 279–311.
Institutionalism, conflict between science and, 15.
Intuition, 179.
Isaiah-prophecies, 53; quoted, 75; authorship, 88.

Jacob, 146; wrestling with the angel, 215.
Jacquerie, outbreak of the, 97.
James, William, his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 194 f.; case cited by, 200; on prayer, 207; his review of Spencer's *Autobiography*, 216.
Jefferson, C. E., address cited, 44 n.
Jesuits, rise of the, 183.
Job, Book of, cited, 147.
Johannine treatment of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, 155, 156–159; compared with the Pauline, 161.
John, Gospel of, cited, 155; quoted, 180.
Johnson, Samuel, on the Presbyterians, 47.
Johnson's *Universal Encyclopedia* cited, 50.
Jonah, Book of, 53.
Jonah, experience of, 88, 89.
Joss Fritz, 98.
Jowett, Benjamin, his theology disapproved of by Lord Shaftesbury, 8.
Judaism, formalism and real religion in, 74–76; Sabbath of, 76; laws of, 76.
Jude the Obscure, theological aspect of, 64.

Kant, Immanuel, 9, 17, 103, 135.
Keats, John, quoted, 253.
Keble, John, mentioned, 187.
Kidd, Benjamin, mentioned, 138.
Kim, Kipling's, 106.
Knowledge, said to have three degrees, 179.
Kurucks of Hungary, uprising of, 98.

Labor organization, 104: progress of, in the last century, 112.
Laborer's family in New England, story of, 112.
Langland, William, his *Piers Ploughman* cited, 102.

Last Athenian, theological aspect of, 63.
Law, 28; of the scribes and of Christ, 76, 77.
Laws, natural, supposed to be opposed to divine, 50 ff.
Lecky, W. E. H., quoted, 67, 234.
Lectures, courses founded on antiquated views, 124.
Leibnitz, on the eternally variable church, 33.
Leon, Louis de, 184.
Lewes, Mrs., her translation of Strauss's "Leben Jesu," 30.
Life Saving Service, 117.
Logos, 152.
Lorraine, Duke of, mentioned, 100.
Lowell, J. R., quoted on Stephen's *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, 290.
Luther, Martin, mentioned, 99, 100, 184, 280; his interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans, 181.
Lying Prophets, theological aspect of, 65; quoted, 65, 66.

Macaulay, T. B., his essay on Von Ranke's *History of the Popes*, 1, 4; quoted, 2; on theology not a progressive science, 1, 2, 6, 15, 18.
Maconochie, Alexander, mentioned, 116.
Malachi, Book of, cited, 75.
Man, superstition of, 18, 133; the one unsatisfied creature, 118; a natural believer in resident causes, 132; believes in a transcendent Cause, 132.
Marconi instrument mentioned, 212.
Martineau, James, quoted, 237, 304.
Materialism, 302.
Matheson, George, his *Spiritual Development of St. Paul*, 164.
Maurice, F. D., his influence in new era of thought, 4.
Maurice, the elder, 3.
Maximian, Emperor, 96.
Mazzini, G., quoted, 277.
McGiffert, A. C., his *Apostolic Age* cited, 162.
Medicine, 19.
Medium, so-called spirit, 131.
Method, 28.
Methodist preaching, mentioned, 78.
Mill, James, his misrepresentation of religion, 3.
Miracle, 14, 28, 52, 283, 298.
Missionary work, growth of, in the last century, 44; the missionary a sign of society's solidarity, 118.
Missions, Catholic, speak of a Power resident among men, 191.
Modern Christian thought. *See* Christian, the modern.
Molinos, 178.
Montanist, the, 172, 173; real issue between the Catholic and, 176.
Montanus, 175.
Moody, D. L., mentioned, 191.
More, Sir Thomas, 1.
Morley, John, his *Life of W. E. Gladstone* cited, 255.
Moses, mentioned, 146, 166; voiced the social problem to Pharaoh, 101.
Mysticism, Christian, 75; the office of, 176; lack of, in Britain, 176, 177; grotesqueness of, exaggerated, 178; sense of immediateness in, 181; "experience of God" in, 181.

Nash, H. S., his *Genesis of the Social Conscience* quoted, 109.

Natural, the, and the supernatural, 50–52, 292, 297.
Natural goodness, 305.
Natural selection, growth of its acceptance through its theological significance, 17; seemed to demand a selfish life, 136; to make life a thing of the present, 136.
Nature, 14; seeming antinomy between the supernatural and, 51; force manifested in, is rational, 127; investigator in, who is inspired by faith, 127.
Negation, dogmatism of, 20.
New meaning of some old words, 255–287.
Newman, Cardinal, 39, 186, 187; quoted, 63, 233; his vogue, 189 f.
Newton, Sir Isaac, spiritual significance of his discovery, 295.
Nicene theology criticised, 224.
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 39.
Nonconformist, the, an antiquarian, 3.
Non-resident causes, aversion to the belief in, 131.
Novel, the theologian as lay figure in the, 6; the theological, considered, 62–67.
Numbers, Book of, cited, 147.

Observance, and conduct, 74, 76; faith not content with, 74.
Odysseus congenial to our experience, 196.
Odyssey, the, of the human spirit, 196, 198, 206.
Œdipus quoted, 36.
Old Testament, anticipation of the Holy Spirit in, 146–151.
Opportunist, exalted in the last two generations, 86.
Ordo ordinatus, 13.
Ormuzd, 50.
Oxford Movement, the so-called, 188–191.

Paley, William, argument from design, 1; treatment which his argument received from evolution, 41; his maxim, 255.
Pantheism, 53, 300.
παράκλητος, 145.
Parliamentary Reform, 103.
Paul, Apostle, 314; quoted, 63; his treatment of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, 161–165; on prophets, 169 f.; his doctrine of freedom, 223; and Apollos, 249.
Peabody, F. G., his *Jesus Christ and the Social Question* quoted, 107.
Peace, promised by Christianity, 221; given through truth, 222, 253.
Peasants, early uprisings of, 96–99; the numbers slain, 99, 100.
Peasants' Revolt of 1524, the slain in, 100.
Pedagogy the toy of an empirical psychology, 85.
Peel, Sir Robert, legislation of, 111.
Penal codes, revision of, 117.
Pentecost, 162.
Persecution, 183.
Person, God as a, 229, 231.
Personality, worth of, set aside for mechanical contrivance, 93; of the Holy Spirit, 231.
Peter, Apostle, cited, 164.
Pharaoh, mentioned, 101, 146.
Philo, 150, 157.
Philosophical systems must continue to be partial, 93, 130.
Philosophies, all pass through struggle between system and spirit, 168.

Philpotts, Eden, the theological aspect of his novels, 65; his *Lying Prophets* quoted, 65, 66.
Physical, the, and the spiritual, 301–305.
Platonism, parallel between history of Christianity and history of, 169.
Plimsoll, Samuel, legislation advocated by, 117.
Plotinus, mentioned, 27, 169; cited, 179.
Poe, E. A., his *Pit and Pendulum* mentioned, 19.
Poetry, recent, theological topics in, 67–71; expression of unrest in, 68–70, 233; longing for the future in religious, 234.
Poor, the, pathos of their lot, 96; early uprisings of, 96–99; found a voice with the French Revolution, 100–103; Moses and Amos on, 101; in the time of Chaucer, 102.
Poor man, the, his political rights are won, 104; is searching for economic privileges, 104; the last century generous to, 108–114; his chance of livelihood considered, 110–114.
"Poor Man's Chance of Livelihood, Upon the," article cited, 112 n.
Pope, the head of a system, 83.
Porter, F. C., cited, 149.
Power, its place in the thought of the nineteenth century, 23, 24; exists, 45; search for some other than the influence of Jesus Christ, 61; as a new object of allegiance, 94; must be factor in the answer to the social question, 120; evolutionary theory based on the existence of a, 140; attributes of, 140; is personal, 140, 218; religious revivals speak of a, 191; the Christian Church is under the influence of, 192; recognized in phenomena of conversion, 208 f., 215; which moves in evolution, is identical with that which makes for righteousness in man, 218.
Preaching, ethical, compared with spiritual, 78–80; revival of, in the nineteenth century, 79, 80; weakness of, 79, 80.
Presbyterians, 244; occupied with doctrinal controversy, 4.
Present, Christian man at home in the, 233–237; agnostic's view of, 234, 235.
Priest, the, his conflict with science, 15, 16.
Pringle-Pattison, A. S., cited, 120.
Private judgment, right of, 84, 182.
Professor, who read nothing of a decade's standing, 86.
Prophet, especially imbued with the Spirit of God, 147; the, in early church, 169.
Protestant Church, variableness of, 33.
Protestant theologians, their attitude toward the doctrine of evolution, 32, 33; power of adaptation of, 33.
Psalms of David as sung in New England village, 57.
Psychologist, his study of religious phenomena, 193–195, 200.
Pusey, E. B., Lord Shaftesbury's letter to, quoted, 8; his opposition to German theological thought, 11.

Quacks, political and economic, 105, 108.
Quakers, as a fruit of the Reformation, 85.

Radium, 299.
Raikes, Robert, his organization of the Sunday-school, 43.
Rational, spiritual as, 52; Creative Force is, 264.
Rationalism, and Christianity, 246; German, 247; the methods of, 247–249.
Reason, human, is the chief agent of the divine Spirit in man, 246, 249.
Rebellion, the, mentioned, 205.
Red Cross movement, 117.
Reformation, the, and the Renaissance compared, 25, 26; its attitude toward authority, 83, 84; principles of, but yet dimly discerned, 84; fanaticism how a fruit of, 85; and the Counter-Reformation, 181; its connection with the doctrine of the Spirit, 182; its assertion of freedom, 182.
Regeneration, 60.
Reign of Terror, the slain in, 100.
Religion, facts of, have a claim upon men, 39; the, of the people, 72–95; confusion of thought in, 73, 81; its office the regulation of conduct, 73, 77; doubt in, 73, 82, 87; faith in, 74, 78; observance in, 74, 76; formality and mysticism in, 74, 75; made real in the Hebrew prophets, 75; Pharisaic and Christian, 76, 77; significance of the word, 77, 270; as moribund, 122; system-building in, 82, 83; Biblical criticism a source of doubt in, 87–90; study of comparative religion a source of doubt in, 90; secret of, lies in a principle of life, 131; principle of, must be rational and with an outlook upon the future, 131; evolution gives us a principle essentially religious, 140; experience of, in conversion, 198; interdependence of righteousness and, 226; definition of, 272; natural and revealed, 296.
Religion, study of comparative, 90.
Religions, all feel struggle between system and spirit, 168.
Religious conviction, persistence of, 89.
Religious experience, Professor James on, 194; the abnormal in, 195.
Religious melancholy, 229.
Religious Significance of Recent English Verse, essay on, cited, 71 n.
Renaissance, the, and the Reformation compared, 25, 26.
Resident causes, man a natural believer in, 131–133.
Resurrection of the body, 240–242.
Revelation, 2, 28; case where the content of, was fixed, 12; continuity of, upheld by the Montanist, 172, 174; of God as spirit, 266; the new harmonies of, 288–319; every discovery is a, 295.
Revival, evangelical, of the eighteenth century, 185–188.
Revivals, religious, speak of a Power resident among men, 191.
Revolution, the, mentioned, 205.
Revolutions of 1830 and 1848, had their influence on social conditions, 103.
Robert Elsmere, theological aspect of, 62.
Robinson, John, his saying that more truth might yet break out from the Word of God, 12, 13.

Romanes, G. J., his record of his attitude toward religion, 35–39; his *Thoughts on Religion* quoted, 35–39; his *Candid Examination of Theism* mentioned, 36 n.
Romilly, Sir Samuel, his bills abolishing death penalty for certain felonies, 116.
Ruah, meaning of the word, 146.
Rydberg, Victor, theological aspect of his *Last Athenian*, 63.

Sabatier, his *Religions of Authority* cited, 281; quoted, 316 f.
Sabbath of the Scribes and of the Christians, 76.
Sabellianism, 55.
St. Augustine, quoted on unrest, 69.
St. John, Gospel of, Faust's translation of, 22.
St. Juan of the Cross, 184.
St. Paul's, ruins of, imagined by Macaulay, 1, 18.
St. Teresa, 178, 184.
Salvation, 272, 273.
Sanday, Professor, cited, 161, 162.
Schelling, his theory of the Iliad and the Odyssey, 196.
Schleiermacher, 9.
Science, seeming conflict between theology and, 15, 30–34, 40, 251–253, 292; what it owes to theology, 16–18; investigation in, compared to the arc of a parabola, 128; teaches one universal principle of being, 140.
Scriptures, traditions of, questioned, 88; inspiration of, 91; witness of the, 142–167; have nothing to fear from criticism, 309, 310; message of, is the Spirit's message, 311.
Second Blessing, the, 209.
Seebohm, F., his *The Era of the Protestant Revolution* cited, 100.
Semitic religions, elements of, in Christianity, 90.
Sense as a degree of knowledge, 179.
Seth, Professor, quoted, 181; cited, 262.
Shaftesbury, Lord, his opinion on theological development, 7, 8; *Life and Work* of, by Edwin Hodder, quoted, 8, 9; his disapproval of *Ecce Homo*, Colenso, and Jowett, 8; his letter to Pusey quoted, 8; opposition to German theological influence, 11; what he accomplished and what he exemplified, 108 f.; mentioned, 188.
Sharpe, Granville, mentioned, 110.
Ship, compared to Christian freedom, 222.
Sin, 267; conviction of, 268, 270.
Sin against the Holy Ghost, 250.
Smith, Goldwin, his writings on Old Testament topics mentioned, 6.
Smith, G. A., his *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament* quoted, 149.
Smith, Robertson, his *Prophets of Israel* cited, 146.
Smith, Sydney, his article on insanity and Mad-houses in the "Edinburgh" cited, 114.
Snyder, Carl, his *New Conceptions in Science* quoted, 303 f.
Social problem, the, arising of, 101; voiced by Moses, 101; its existence discerned in every age, 101; in the time of Langland and Chaucer, 102; can-

not be differentiated from social problems, 107, 108; the work of conscience in, 110. *See* Poor man, the; Society.
Social unrest, 96–120, 122; pervasiveness of the question of, 104, 105; is indefinable, 105; lies largely in the "torment of the difference," 119.
Society, is an organism, not a machine, 106, 120; is the outworking of an immanent force, 106; solidarity of, 117.
Socrates confuting Aristodemus, 1.
Speech, freedom of, since the French Revolution, 101.
Spencer, Herbert, mentioned, 93; his *Principles of Biology* cited, 120; his *Autobiography* reviewed, 216 n.
Spencer and Gillen, their *Native Tribes of Australia* cited, 132.
Spirit, working of the, in man, 211, 225, 238, 249, 250; seasons of the, 236; human reason is a chief agent of, 246, 249; God revealed as, 266.
Spirit of God, Old Testament references to, 147; is the dynamic of Christianity in the individual life, 219; is one with Ultimate Force, 219, 220, 229; personality of, 231.
Spirit, the larger doctrine of the, 227–229; makes man at home in the present, 233–237; gives an elasticity to Christian institutions, 237–246; makes reason a chief agent of the Divine Spirit in man, 246–251; rids us of fear of criticism, 251–253; gives freedom of faith through truth, 253.
Spirit-possession, primitive belief in, 131.
Spiritual, as rational, 52; exaggerated antinomy between the physical and, 301.
Spiritual experience, the power of the church lay in, 184, 185.
Stanley, A. P., his reference to Abraham as a sheik, 87.
Starbuck, Professor, his *Psychology of Religion*, 195.
Stephen, Sir James, his essays, 186.
Stephen, Leslie, 290.
Strauss, David Friedrich, his *Leben Jesu* mentioned, 3; the Frankenstein of Hegelianism, 10, 11; brought German influence in theology under suspicion in England, 10, 11.
Strudwick, James and Anne, the story of, 110, 113.
Submerged tenth, have found voice, 101.
Sunday-school, inception and growth of, 43.
Sunrise, significance of the word, 256.
Supernatural, the, 14, 28; the natural and the, 51, 292, 297; is beyond our experience of nature, 298.
Superstition, tendency of men to cherish, 18, 133.
Survival of the fittest, 29.
Swabia, peasants slain in, 100.
Swedenborg, Emanuel, anticipated the nebular hypothesis, 17.
Swete, Professor, cited, 146; quoted, 150.
Swinburne, A. C., quoted, 67, 68.
Symbols, Christian, those that express experience are likely to abide, 244.
System-building, of Western Christendom, 82, 83; of the Reformation, 83; arraignment of, in the last two gen-

erations, 86, 87; some look for new, 124, 129.
Systems, inadequacy of, against time, 124, 129; question whether their day is not past, 125; of theology compared to a tree, 129; struggle between spirit and, 168.
Tauler, John, mentioned, 176, 178; contrasted with John Wickliffe, 177.
Teleology, a larger place found for, by evolution, 42, 140.
Telephone, long distance, 298.
Tennyson, Alfred, his "infant crying in the night," cited, 67; quoted on faith, 71; prophet of idea of evolution in theology, 135; quoted, 116.
Terms persist because they are symbols of experience, 258.
Tertullian and the Church, 173 f.
Tess of the D'Urbervilles, theological aspect of, 64.
Thackeray, W. M., on Dickens, 312.
Theatre, the, 197.
Theism, principle of continuity becoming to, 40.
Theological thought, the present state of popular, 47–71.
Theologian, the, as a novelist's lay figure, 6; his rights recognized by the apostles of the doctrine of development, 34.
Theology, Macaulay on its not being a progressive science, 1, 2, 6, 15, 18; based upon revelation, 2; German influence in, 3, 4, 9–11; slow dissemination of the results of investigation in, 5; attitude of the "man of letters" toward, 5, 6; new era of theological development, 9 ff.; seeming conflict between science and, 15, 30 ff.; advantage to science from, 16–18; as intolerant of development, 18, 20, 121; as capable of development, 19, 21; confusion of, in the nineteenth century, 26; importance of its place in modern thought, 26, 27, 34, 39, 49, 62; relation of new principles to, 27; early effect of the doctrine of evolution on, 28–30; and dogma, 31; grounds for the confident and expectant attitude of, 34–45; its adoption of the historic method, 40; method of development theory an aid to, 40–42; substantiation of, by evolution, 41, 48; fashion in, 48; lack of system in, 50, 62; in recent fiction and poetry, 62–71; use of fiction in discussion of, 63; as moribund, 121; material of, multiplied by religious experience, 122, 123; agnosticism and, 125; system of, must remain partial, 128; systems of, compared to a tree, 129; secret of its permanence lies in a principle, 130; progress of, through recognition of the Spirit, 232, 233.
Thesis, the, 124–141.
Thirty-nine Articles, 59.
Thompson, Francis, quoted, 69.
Thomson James, quoted, 64; his *City of Dreadful Night*, 315.
θρησκεία, 77.
Tintoretto, his Judgment Scene mentioned, 13.
Total depravity, 59; doctrine of, overstates a great truth, 59.
Tractarian, not bound by tradition, 2.

Tractarian movement of the nineteenth century, 185, 186.
Tradition, finds worshipers among theologians, 34; in ill repute in last two generations, 86.
Transcendent Cause, a, man a believer in, 132, 134.
Transubstantiation, Sir Thomas More's faith in, 1, 2.
Tree, systems of theology and philosophy, compared to a, 129.
Trevelyan, Sir George O., on Wesley, 188 n.
Trinitarian, danger for the, 54; the "mere logicker," 54; his Sabellianism, 55; difficulties of the, 55.
Trinity, conception bordering on tritheism, 14; Hegel's philosophy of the, 197; doctrine of the, expresses experience, 263.
Tritheism, 54.
Truth, freedom of faith given by, 222, 253; search for, is the leading of the Spirit, 254.
Tübingen School, works of, are sealed books to many English readers, 11.
Tuckney, 52.
Tulloch, John, his *Religious Thought in Britain* quoted, 3.
Tyler, Wat, his insurrection, 97.
Tyndall, John, theologian and scientist, 17.

Ultimate Cause, demand for a recognition of, is irresistible, 134.
Ultimate Force and Immanent Spirit are one, 220.
Ultimate source of authority, 286, 314–319; is found in the Spirit, 318.
Unitarian, and Deist, 53; and Pantheist, 53.
Unitarianism, rationalism of, 246.
Unitarians, 3.
Unknowable, the, 29.

Vaughan, R. A., his *Hours with the Mystics* cited, 169, 179.
Vital energy of the divine nature, 147; in all energy, 148.

Wage-earner is seeking for economic privileges, 104.
War of 1812 mentioned, 205.
Ward, Mrs. Humphry, her *Robert Elsmere* cited, 6; theological aspect of her *Robert Elsmere*, 62, 63.
Watson, W., quoted, 118.
Webb, Sidney, his *History of Trades Unionism* cited, 104.
Wendt, H. H., his *Teachings of Jesus* cited, 155.
Wesley, John, mentioned, 187, 188 n.
Wheel of things, idea that society is bound to, 106, 107.
Whichcote, quoted, 52.
Whitefield, George, mentioned, 187.
Wickliffe, John, mysticism of, 176; contrasted with John Tauler, 177; his church in Lutterworth, 240.
Wilberforce, William, mentioned, 188.
Williams, Rowland, his part in the heretical *Essays and Reviews*, 288.
Wilson, H. B., his part in the heretical *Essays and Reviews*, 288.
Wisdom, Book of, quoted, 150.
Witness of Scripture, the, 142–167.
Word, the, Christ's difficulty in interpreting to his followers, 152.

Word of God, Robinson's saying that more truth might yet break out from, 13.
Words, the new meaning of some old, 255–287; significance of, 255.
Wordsworth, William, his influence in new era of thought, 41; quoted, 206.
World, the, and the church, 58–62.
Worth of Human Life, Upon the, article cited, 112 n.
Würtemberg, peasants slain in, 100.

Young, Arthur, his *Journeys in France* cited, 102.
Young Men's Christian Association, 43.
Young Women's Christian Association, 43.

Zeitgeist, the, 22–46.
Zophar, mentioned, 27.
Zwingli, Ulrich, 280.

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